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THE
CHRISTIAN EXAMINER
AND
GENERAL REVIEW.

THIRD SERIES—NO. X.

MARCH, 1837.

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1837.

NOTICE.

With the present Number it will be perceived that the *Christian Examiner* passes into the hands of new publishers. In entering upon the charge of this journal, the publishers would respectfully solicit attention to its present condition and wants.

The whole number of subscribers to the *Christian Examiner* falls short of one thousand. This number, it must be evident to those who have any knowledge of the necessary expenses of a periodical work, for every page of the contributions to which the highest price is paid, is barely sufficient to afford it a meagre support. In view of this fact,—in view, also, of the abundant ability of the denomination, under whose auspices it is issued, to give to their principal journal an ample support,—in view, particularly, of the character which it has hitherto sustained, of its rank among the periodical publications of the day, and, especially, of the important purposes which it has served, and which it is hoped it may still continue to serve, in the cause of religious truth and religious liberty,—the publishers entertain a confidence that an appeal for a more extended patronage of this work will be met with favor.

With a view particularly to the accomplishment of this object, the publishers give notice that they have made arrangements with the *REV. ALLEN PUTNAM*, by which he becomes the purchaser of the whole of an *increased* edition of the several Numbers of this journal as they shall be successively issued. In this way it is hoped to secure for the *Examiner* an adequate support. The success of this arrangement, however, it must be obvious, depends entirely upon the zeal with which it is seconded by the friends of the work. Persons wishing to become subscribers are respectfully requested to send in their names to *Mr. Putnam*.

Agents, and others who have been in the habit of receiving their copies of this work from the publisher in Boston, are notified that all communications pertaining to subscriptions are to be addressed "*To the REV. ALLEN PUTNAM, Boston, care of JAMES MUNROE & Co.*" Other communications are to be directed to "*the Editors of the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER,*" care of the same.

JAMES MUNROE & CO., Publishers,
134 Washington St.,—opposite School St.

JAMES MUNROE & CO. have in press Vols. II. and III. of NOYES'S TRANSLATION OF THE HEBREW PROPHETS.

Arranged in Chronological Order.

Vol. I. of this work was published in the year 1833, and contains Joel, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah.

Vol. II. will contain Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah, Jeremiah, and Lamentations.

Vol. III. will contain the remainder of the Prophetical Writings, comprising Ezekiel, Daniel, Jonah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

The Reviewer of Vol. I. of this work says,

"We conceive that *Mr. Noyes* has made the Christian public much his debtor by the portion now before us of a version of that difficult and strongly interesting part of Scripture, the Hebrew prophecies. — We have little to do but repeat the testimony which we have borne, on the two previous occasions of his coming before the public, to the exceeding value of his labors. Three things are especially to be spoken of in his praise; his learning, his cautious and sound judgment, and his beautiful taste. In the two last qualities, particularly, he is very advantageously distinguished from *Lowth* and *Newcome*, with whose works the present volume is most likely to be compared."

Christian Examiner.

THE
CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

N^o. LXXIX.

THIRD SERIES — N^o. X.

MARCH, 1837.

ART. I. — *Dramas*, by JOANNA BAILLIE. In Three Volumes.
Svo. London: Longman, Rees, Orme, & Co. 1836.

WE are now in possession of no less than seven volumes of Joanna Baillie's *Dramas*; — the three volumes of plays on the Passions, which were published some years ago, a volume of miscellaneous plays, and the volumes before us. This collection may easily be called the richest gift which has been made to English dramatic literature in the present age; and we believe, that there are many who would not charge us with extravagance, if we were to say, that it is the richest which has been ever made to it, excepting the unapproached donation of the plays of Shakspeare. In offering such an opinion, we enter not into the question of individual genius. We remember the works, — a large portion indeed of which we should not grieve to forget, — of Ben Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Massinger, Otway, and others. But, regarding both quantity and quality, intellectual elevation and moral influence, truth of substance and beauty of form, and holding a fair balance both of merits and defects, we hesitate not to place the name of this lady above even those distinguished names. However some of those writers may have excelled her in the graces of poetry and the flashes of intellect, there is a sustained dignity, a pure loftiness in her muse, which, with other attributes of power and beauty, entitle her to the precedence. But, if the charge of extrava-

gance should be preferred against us, we might shelter ourselves behind the lyre of the great Northern minstrel. Listen to its accents.

“ — the notes that rung
From the wild harp, which silent hung
By silver Avon's holy shore,
Till twice an hundred years rolled o'er;
When she, the bold enchantress came,
With fearless hand, and heart on flame!
From the pale willow snatched the treasure,
And swept it with a kindred measure,
Till Avon's swans, while rung the grove
With Monfort's hate and Basil's love,
Awakening at the inspired strain,
Deemed their own Shakspeare lived again.”

So sings Sir Walter Scott of the poetess of the Passions, — somewhat enthusiastically, we confess; for it must only have been in a dream of patriotism and gallantry that he could have heard that “kindred measure,” or seen the swans of Avon awaken and incline as if at the song of their master. His lines are good authority, nevertheless, for high admiration, and may support the plain prose assertion, that, with the exception of the plays of Shakspeare, our dramatic literature can boast of no such treasures, in their whole extent, as the plays of Joanna Baillie.

✓ And yet these plays are for the closet rather than the stage. They are for select readers, rather than for a promiscuous audience. They are too classical, too chaste, too solemn, too good for the mass of those who frequent our theatres. They have power to move the hearts, and rouse the sensibilities, and confirm the principles of those who feed on truth and nature; but they have little power to command the shouts of pit and gallery. The lovers and patrons of the drama, as they are styled, must be lovers of refined sentiment, and intelligent admirers of poetry for its own real excellences, before they will patronize or even suffer the dramas of Miss Baillie. The manager who should have so much taste and so little wit as to bring forward upon his boards successive representations of these dramas, would find ere long, by the intimations of a thin house and a rapidly-collapsing purse, that he and the much feared and flattered public held different sentiments concerning the good and the beautiful, and that he must either be ruined, or return to the wonted course of gorgeous spectacles, outrageous tragedies, and foolish farces. In some coming age, the creations of this lady's mind may be personated on the stage; but, at present, they must be confined to the library.

In saying this, we know that we are expressing an opinion not the most acceptable to the lady herself. She is evidently very desirous, as it is natural she should be, that her plays may be performed and become popular in the theatres. Her several prefaces bear constant witness to this desire. But there are few who can receive the fulfilment of all their wishes. Let her be satisfied with the rank which she has won, and with the praise which crowns her name and will preserve her memory. Let her not complain that she has not reached the transcendent eminence on which *he* sits, who has written for the solitary student and the thronged playhouse, for all classes and for all times. Let her be thankful for the joy she gives to those who are not accustomed to besiege the ticket-office, and run mad after favorite actors and actresses, but whose approbation is doubtless as valuable as if they exhibited in these modes the quality of their taste and principles. Many of those who love to read her plays, seldom or never set their feet inside of a theatre; while the great body of those who frequent and support the theatre, and whose taste must be and is obeyed and consulted, would not go there to hear such plays as hers.

But Miss Baillie thinks that the absentees are wrong in neglecting the theatre, and that, if they would change their plan of action, and enter its doors in force, they would redeem it to the dominion of good taste and good morals. She allows the truth and the weight of the charges which are brought against playhouses; allows that the pieces generally exhibited in them are of bad tendency, and that the company who fill them and hang about them are, in great proportion, disorderly and worthless; but she still maintains, that the resort of a better class, those who conscientiously stay away, would alter the state of things, and remedy those crying evils.

"A manager," she says, "must suit his plays to the character of the most influential part of his audience. The crowd in the gallery and pit can be very well entertained with a piece that has neither coarseness nor immorality in it; but the more refined and better informed, who generally occupy the boxes, and occasionally the pit, cannot be pleased with one in which there is any thing immoral or indecorous. But, if the refined and well-informed stay away, there is nothing, then, to be taken into the account but how to please such auditors as commonly fill the pit and galleries; and the boxes will very soon be occupied by company, somewhat richer indeed, but not more scrupulous or intelligent than the others.

Now, supposing matters to have come to this pass, what kind of entertainment will be provided for them? Scurrility and broad satire is more easily procured than wit; and delineations of low profligacy require less skill than those of the habits and characters of higher or more virtuous society. Will a manager, then, be at pains to provide delicate fare for those who are as well satisfied with garbage? This is surely not to be expected; and, in as far as moral or intellectual improvement has been or may be superseded by intellectual debasement, occasioned by such well-meaning absentees from our theatres, so far does their absenting themselves do mischief." — Vol. II., *Preface*.

This is just one of those specious arguments, the main defect in which is, that they are flatly contradicted by facts and experience. Is it a fact, that the theatre has ever been esteemed a pure and innocent place? Is it a fact, that it was a more pure and innocent place before a portion of society ceased to frequent it, than it was after their desertion? Is it not a fact, that the restraining influence exercised on the drama and the play-house by those who stay away, is as strong as that which is exercised by those who go? What was it which originally drove away from the theatre the sober and the scrupulous, and thus created the absentees,—its morality or its immorality? Did the absentees cause the corruption of the theatre, or the corruption of the theatre cause the absentees? In the mother country, a large proportion of the clergy go to the theatres; in our own, they never go. Is the English theatre more moral than the American? And what do the English clergy gain by going to the theatre? They gain the privilege of hearing occasional scurrilous jokes about parsons, and the equally enviable one of seeing themselves pictured in such books as "Syntax's Tour," and "Tom and Jerry," seated among a motley assembly on the pit benches, in full costume of black coats, white wigs, and red noses. Such is their gain, and such the influence which they exercise on the drama and on the opinions of the public.

But a great number of the virtuous portion of the community do go to the theatre, especially when there is any thing remarkably attractive to be heard or seen there. They go, because they are not principled against going. And what is their influence on this place of amusement? They are carried along with the stream. They give their countenance to many things which, under any other roof, they would deem intolerable.

ble. The theatre still remains, in the estimation of all who will seriously consider its organization and tendencies, as the place where there is more temptation concentrated than in any other place which can be named; where the passions of the young are beset and stimulated as they are nowhere else; where pernicious excitement is breathed in with the air, and first steps on the road to ruin are taken with a sad and undiminished frequency. Tell us not, that it is our duty to go to this place. Mock us not with the fantasy that we should do any good by going. The plain fact is, that the main support of the theatre is derived from the time-killing, amusement-loving, unreflecting, and unsettled members of society; and, until the taste of these becomes refined, and their manners and their morals reach a far higher elevation than at present, any essential reform of the theatre appears to us to be hopeless. We entertain no superstitious notions concerning plays or play-houses, no hostile feelings against players or their patrons. We merely say, that, looking on the theatre as it is and always has been, we cannot enter its doors, and have no idea that it will experience a radical improvement, till there is an essential change for the better in a very large portion of the community.

Having thus ventured to express our dissent from the opinions advanced by the authoress respecting our duties to the theatre, we will say a word of her three recently published volumes. And here we must give notice, that whatever praise we have bestowed or may bestow upon her plays, is the property of her tragedies and serious dramas only. If these cannot be publicly represented, because they are in a certain sense too good, her comedies do not deserve to be represented, because they are not worth the cost and trouble of representation. They fail in the very spirit of comedy. They have neither ease, nor grace, nor wit. Some of them are amusing enough, on a first perusal, to one who has time on his hands; for they contain scenes and situations which are sufficiently ludicrous to provoke a smile. But that is all. It is not in Miss Baillie's nature to write comedy; and therefore in speaking of her plays, we do not think for a moment of her comedies, so called.

They who have read the formerly published plays of this lady, will in all probability be disappointed by the volumes now before us. And they will be disappointed, not because these volumes are inferior to those which preceded them, but because they are not superior to them, and are too like them. We are

apt to be unjust to the works of cotemporary authors, in demanding that each work shall excel the one which went before it. If it does not excel it, we think that it is not equal to it, for it has not the freshness with which the first surprised and charmed us. Towards authors whose works were all printed and bound, before we could read or lisp, we are more fair. The works stand before us in wholeness and unity, and we simply point to those which please us best, without regard to the order of their original appearance. We fear that the "*Basil*," the "*De Montfort*," the "*Ethwald*," and the "*Constantine Paleologus*" of Miss Baillie have ill prepared her readers to estimate aright the merits of "*Henriquez*," "*The Separation*," and "*The Homicide*"; and yet these last are noble plays, and fully sustain the writer's reputation. There is the same grave and grand spirit in these as in those, the same lofty vein of thought, the same powerful expression of deep-heaving passion. There are, too, in the latter, the same faults which are observable in the former; a certain occasional stiffness, a defect of plot, a dead clumsiness in some of the subordinate characters. The passion of jealousy is too often employed to set the machinery of the piece in motion, to harass our feelings with its gloomy suspicions and obstinate misapprehensions, to fill up the sad scenes and bring about the fatal catastrophe. Though these three last volumes, therefore, are no improvement upon the elder born, we would not by any means have lost them, and we could not now upon any account part with them.

It is one of the peculiarities of Miss Baillie's plays, that there are but few passages in them which stand out singly and splendidly from the page, to be seized by the memory, and presented as specimens of her genius. If you take up a pencil to mark the lines which please you, you will hardly determine where to begin; and if you do begin, you will hardly know where to end. The lines are striking in their connexion with each other, and with the sentiment of the whole play, rather than by themselves. A whole scene, a whole character will be lofty throughout,—one high table-land, without peaks and pinnacles. Thus it is that she is seldom quoted. She has written no short, bright sentences, no exquisitely condensed periods, no bold proverbs for the quoter. For such beauties, and we would not depreciate them, he must go to other poets. From her he must quote at length, or not at all.

If we were to quote scenes from these recent volumes for the

express purpose of vindicating their claims to an equal rank with the others, we should probably select those scenes which have already been transferred to the pages of the English reviews. But, because they have already appeared there, we shall pass them by, and go to some one of the plays which has not, so far as we know, been quoted from. Let us look into the drama, for instance, which is entitled "The Bride," and is contained in the third volume. It was written at the request of Sir Alexander Johnston when he was "President of His Majesty's Council in Ceylon," who thought, from his knowledge of the peculiar tastes of the people whom he governed, and of the good impression which had already been made upon them by a translation of one of Hannah More's Sacred Dramas, that a dramatic piece of a Christian character and tendency from Miss Baillie's pen, would assist his honorable labors for their improvement. Whether "The Bride" was ever translated into the Cingalese language, whether it was ever represented before the natives, and if so, with what effect, we do not know. This history of its origin and purpose, however, invests it with a singular and sufficient interest. In the Preface to this piece, Miss Baillie makes a short address to those for whose especial use it was written, and in whose country the story of it is supposed to have happened. She commences it thus. "I endeavour to set before you that leading precept of the Christian religion which distinguishes it from all other religions, the forgiveness of injuries. A bold and fiery-tempered people is apt to consider it as mean and pusillanimous to forgive; and I am persuaded that many a vindictive and fatal blow has been inflicted by those, whose hearts at the same moment have yearned to pardon their enemies. But Christians, who, notwithstanding the very imperfect manner in which they obey and have obeyed the precepts and example of Jesus Christ, do still acknowledge them, and have their general conduct influenced by them, — are they a feeble and unhonored race? Look round in your own land, in other countries most connected with your own, and you will acknowledge that this is not the case. You will, therefore, I hope, receive in good part the moral of my story."

The story, or plot, is as follows. Rasinga, a brave and powerful chieftain, has lived for many years in faithful union with a single wife, Artina, though authorized by the custom of the country to have more than one. It happens, however, that,

having rescued the daughter of a mountain chieftain from a gang of robbers who had sacked her father's "petty hold," and having obtained a glimpse of the young lady's face, he had fallen in love with her, and on his return home had sent a palanquin and suitable guard to conduct her in splendor to his castle, as his second "Bride." It happens, also, that the brother of his wife Artina, Samarkoon, who was with him in the fight and rescue, is equally and more virtuously enamoured of the chieftain's daughter, and, being exasperated both by jealousy and by sympathy with his wronged and most wretched sister, determines to intercept the guarded procession, and take the "Bride" for his own. This piece of desperate high-treason he effects by the assistance of the remnant of those very robbers whom he had so recently met in conflict. He waylays and vanquishes his brother-in-law's guard, takes possession of the lady, and carries her to his own castle. But hardly has he arrived within its gates, when the incensed Rasinga appears before them and summons him to surrender, and, being resisted, forces the castle, and recaptures the Bride. As he returns in triumph, with Samarkoon in chains, he is met by Juan de Creda, a Spanish physician, and religious man, who, in a former visit to Ceylon, had saved his life by his professional skill. On the strength of the influence which this circumstance had given Juan, he boldly intercedes with Rasinga in behalf of Samarkoon, but in vain. After reaching his house, the chieftain sternly resists the pleadings of Montebesa, his mother, of his wife Artina, and again of Juan, who sets before him the love and long-suffering of Jesus. Bent on vengeance, he resolves on the execution of Samarkoon; and, as Artina is soon afterwards detected in an attempt to free her brother from his prison, she also is doomed to suffer death. Samar, her son, a noble-hearted boy, at once determines to die with his mother, and cannot be moved from his purpose. Preparations are made for the execution of the two prisoners, and at this period Rasinga is thus introduced.

"Enter RASINGA, and places himself in the seat: a deep silence follows for a considerable time.

MIHDOONY (who has kept guard with his spearmen over SAMARKOON, now approaching RASINGA).

The hour is past, my lord, which was appointed;
And you commanded me to give you notice.

Is it your pleasure that the executioners
Proceed to do their office on the prisoners,
Who are all three prepared?

RASINGA.

What dost thou say?

MIHDOONY.

The three prepared for death abide your signal.

RASINGA.

There are but two.

MIHDOONY.

Forgive opposing words; there is a third.

RASINGA.

A third, say'st thou? and who?

MIHDOONY.

Your son, my lord;

A volunteer for death, whom no persuasion
Can move to be divided from his mother.

RASINGA.

I cannot credit this; it is some craft, —
Some poor device. Go, bring the boy to me.

[MIHDOONY leads SAMAR to his father.]

Why art thou here, my child? and is it so,
That thou dost wish to die?

SAMAR.

I wish to be where'er my mother is,
Alive or dead.

RASINGA.

Think well of what thou say'st!

It shall be so if thou indeed desire it.
But be advised; death is a dreadful thing.

SAMAR.

They say it is: but I will be with her;
I'll die her death, and feel but what she suffers.

RASINGA.

And art thou not afraid? Thou'rt ignorant;
Thou dost not know the misery of drowning; —
The booming waters closing over thee,
And thou still sinking, struggling in the tank,
On whose deep bottom weeds and water snakes,

And filthy lizards will around thee twine,
Whilst thou art choking. It is horrible.

SAMAR.

The death that is appointed for my mother
Is good enough for me. We'll be together:
Clinging to her, I shall not be afraid,
No, nor will she.

RASINGA.

But wherefore wilt thou leave thy father, Samar?
Thou'st not offended me; I love thee dearly;
I have no son but thee.

SAMAR.

But thou wilt soon.
Thy new young wife will give thee soon another,
And he will be thy son; but I will be
Son of Artina. We'll be still together;
When, in the form of antelope or loorie,
She wends her way to Boodhoo, I shall still
Be as her young one, sporting by her side.

RASINGA (*catching him in his arms, and
bursting into tears*).

My generous boy! my noble valiant boy!
O such a son bestow'd on such a father!
Live, noble creature! and thy mother also!
Her crime is pardon'd, if it was a crime;
Ye shall not be divided.

SAMAR (*running back to ARTINA*).

O mother! raise your eyes! you are to live;
We're both to live; my father says we are.
And he has wept and he has kiss'd me too,
As he was wont to do, ay, fonder, far.
Come, come! (*Pulling her towards RASINGA*).
He's good, you need not fear him now.

RASINGA.

Artina, that brave child has won thy life;
And he hath won for me — I have no words
That can express what he hath won for me.
But thou art sad and silent; how is this,
With life, and such a son to make life sweet?

ARTINA.

I have a son, but my brave father, soon, —
Who died an honor'd death, and in his grave

Lies like an honor'd chief, — will have no son,
No male descendant, living on the earth,
To keep his name and lineage from extinction.

[RASINGA *throws himself into his seat, and buries his face in his mantle.*]

FIRST SPECTATOR (*in a low voice*).

Well timed and wisely spoken : 't is a woman
Worthy to be the mother of that boy.

SECOND SPECTATOR (*in a low voice to the first*).

Look, look, I pray thee, how Rasinga's breast
Rises and falls beneath its silken vesture.

FIRST SPECTATOR (*as before*).

There is within a dreadful conflict passing,
Known by these tokens, as swoln waves aloft
Betray the secret earthquake's deep-pent struggles.

SECOND SPECTATOR (*as before*).

But he is calmer now, and puts away
The cover from his face : he seems relieved.

RASINGA (*looking round him*).

Approach, De Creda ; thou hast stood aloof :
Thou feel'st my late rude passion and unkindness.
Misery makes better men than me unkind ;
But pardon me, and I will make amends.
I would not listen to thy friendly counsel,
But now I will most freely grant to thee
Whatever grace or favor thou desirest :
Even now, before thou nam'st it.

JUAN.

Thanks, thanks, Rasinga ! this is brave amends.

(*Runs to SAMARKOON and commands his chains to be knocked off, speaking impatiently as it is doing.*)

Out on such tardy bungling ! Ye are craftsmen
Who know full well the art to bind men's limbs,
But not to set them free.

(*Leads SAMARKOON, when unbound, towards RASINGA, speaking to him as they go.*)

Come, noble Samarkoon ! nay, look more gracious :
If thou disdain'st to thank him for thy life,
That falls to me, and I will do it gladly.

(*Presenting SAMARKOON to RASINGA.*)

This is the boon which thou hast granted me,
The life of Samarkoon : a boon more precious

To him who grants than who receives it. Yet
Take my most ardent thanks; take many thanks
From other grateful bosoms, beating near thee.

ARTINA (*kneeling to embrace the knees of RASINGA*).
And mine; O mine! wilt thou not look upon me?
I do not now repine that thou art changed:
Be happy with another fairer dame,
It shall not grieve me now.

RASINGA (*raising her*).
Away, Artina, do not thank me thus.
Remove her, Samarkoon, a little space,
(*Waving them off.*)
Juan de Creda, art thou satisfied?
Have I done well?

JUAN.
Yes, I am satisfied.

RASINGA (*drawing himself up with dignity*).
But I am not; and that which I have done
Would not have satisfied the generous Saviour
Who died upon the cross. — Thy friend is pardon'd,
And more than pardoned; — he is now my brother,
And I to him resign the mountain bride.
[*A shout of joy bursts from all around: ARTINA
folds SAMAR to her breast, and SAMARKOON falls
at the feet of RASINGA.*] — Vol. III. pp. 360–366.

Of course every thing now terminates happily, and as it should. The moral effect of this drama on those for whom it was intended, could be no other than good; for they could not but respect the bravery and dauntlessness of the characters represented, and would naturally be won by this respect to approve the issue of the story, though it might be at variance with their notions concerning the obligation of revenge. The scene which we have extracted is not so striking a one as might have been given, and yet it is characteristic of the writer's manner. The pathos of the boy's filial love, the lofty yet gentle spirit and intense affection of the mother, and the full though late generosity of the chief, appeal to our hearts, and produce impressions there which we feel it is good for us to cherish.

We have been somewhat surprised to learn, that a neat edition, in one octavo volume, of Miss Baillie's works, comprising several of the plays which are printed in these three last vol-

umes, and every thing which had previously appeared from her pen, which was published in this country in 1832, has met with a slow and discouraging sale. It cannot be, that the existence of this edition has been generally known to the lovers of good literature. They surely would not have suffered the dust of five years to settle upon it, as it rested undisturbed on the shelves of the bookseller, while many an inferior work has tasked the activity of printer and binder, and entered into a wide and rapid circulation. We do not believe that the public were mistaken, when they hailed the *Plays on the Passions* with an admiring welcome on their first appearance. And though public attention has been diverted from them by hundreds of names and works which have since risen, some of them deservedly, into popularity, the fame of the authoress of those plays will survive the temporary forgetfulness, for it is founded on living and enduring excellence and on the unchangeable affections of the human heart.

F. W. P. G.

ART. II. — *The Question of Expediency.*

IT is often the case, that, in popular discussions upon questions of duty, there is manifested great confusion of ideas, in regard to the true nature and proper application of the abstract moral principles, upon which such discussions are professedly based. It becomes then a matter of some importance, to separate these abstract principles from the discussions in which they are involved, that we may give them a more full and impartial examination, and to regard the discussions themselves, only so far as they may serve to illustrate the principles we are examining. These remarks seem to us applicable to the popular discussions upon the subject of slavery, with which our land has been filled. We suppose that the great mass of the community, who have reflected upon this subject, may be divided into two classes. One class contends, that when, either by the light of nature or from the express precept or general tenor of Scripture, it is discovered to be wrong in the abstract to hold slaves, it becomes the duty of every slave-holder to act

in accordance with this abstract principle, to emancipate his slaves at once, without regard to the peculiar circumstances of the case, and without inquiry as to the probable consequences which may result from the act. The other class contends, that, although it be admitted to be wrong in the abstract to hold slaves, yet, that, before proceeding to action and actually emancipating those at any particular time and place in bondage, inquiry should be made into the peculiar circumstances of the case and the probable consequences of the act, into the questions, whether those to be liberated are qualified for the possession and enjoyment of liberty, and in what manner they may be set free, so as to secure the best probable consequences to the slaves themselves, to their masters, and to the whole community. It will be perceived, that there is an essential difference between these two classes, as to the standard of duty. They both agree, in regard to the fact, that slavery, in all its bearings, is an evil, and in regard to the *abstract* principle, that it is wrong to hold slaves. But they differ in regard to the rule of conduct. The one class contends for right in the abstract as the only standard, the sole rule. The other puts in a plea in behalf of expediency, as being, in some cases, worthy of regard, and contends that there may be and often are cases, in which the course to be pursued must be determined by a regard to the circumstances of the cases themselves. The inquiry then which arises in regard to the difference between these two classes, is this. Ought we, or ought we not, to ask in regard to our conduct the question of expediency? This we conceive to be, in an eminent degree, a practical inquiry,—one which must often arise in men's minds in regard to the common every-day transactions of life, as well as in regard to all the public and benevolent operations of the day. It is also a question, as we believe, in regard to which it is important that we have clear and correct views. We wish therefore, in the remarks we are about to offer, to invite the attention of our readers to the consideration of this highly important and eminently practical question, the question whether we are to regard right in the abstract as the only unbending rule of duty, or are to permit its decisions to be modified in certain cases by a regard to expediency, to the peculiar circumstances of the case and the probable consequences of the act.

The more carefully this question is divested of every thing which may cause confusion of ideas, the better prepared shall

we be for an impartial examination and correct decision. We remark then, in the first place, that it is not a question between duty on the one hand and expediency on the other. For all admit that, when we have once discovered the course of duty, there is no further question to be asked. It matters not at this point of the inquiry, whether the course may seem to us to be expedient, or may bid fair to be pleasant, or may promise to be advantageous. If we are satisfied that it is the course of duty, we must go resolutely forward in its performance, or be guilty of sin in its neglect.

This the advocate for expediency admits as freely and as fully as his opponent. We are the more particular to state this distinctly, and at the outset of our remarks, because it is a point in regard to which there seems to be much confusion in the minds of many. We have again and again, when querying with our fellow men in regard to the expediency of some proposed course, been cut short with the remark, "that with considerations of this character, with the question of expediency we have nothing to do: when we have once discovered the path of duty, our only course is to press resolutely onwards regardless of consequences." True, we answer, we agree with you in this; but, in cases where we are not guided by express revelation, we ask, May not the expediency of the action, its utility, its accordance with the fitness of things, or, in other words, with our natures and our relations, the circumstances of the case and the probable consequences of the act, may not these be considerations which it is important to take into account in order to determine *what is duty*? This is the rank we give to all questions of this character. We do not believe that expediency, utility, or an agreeableness with the fitness of things constitutes either the foundation or the rule of duty. We regard the will of God, not only as the sole rule, but as the sole foundation of all duty. But, while we reject the systems of moral philosophy founded upon these different views, we do believe and would contend that expediency, utility, the circumstances of the case and the probable consequences of the act, are considerations important to be taken into account, in order to ascertain, in the absence of direct revelation, what is the will of God.

From these remarks it will be perceived that this question does not relate to the ultimate foundation of duty. For all, whether interested in this discussion or not, admit that the ulti-

mate foundation of all duty is the will of God. We have said, *all* admit this. We correct the assertion. There is an apparent and verbal difference upon this point. There are some, who say that an action is right, because God wills it. There are others who say that an action is right, because it is in accordance with our natures and our relations, that it is our duty to perform actions of this character whether God wills and commands them or not, and that, if we could conceive it possible that God should will and command a different course, it would be wrong and sinful for us to pursue that course. It is an improper mode of expression, these contend, to say that an action is right because God wills it. The more proper mode of speaking, say they, is that God wills and commands a certain course because it is right in itself, befitting our natures and our relations. We have called this an apparent and verbal difference. To us it seems to be so. Does any one contend that an action is right only because it is in accordance with our natures and our relations? Who, we ask, gave us these natures, and placed us in these relations? We are what we are, and where we are, simply because such was God's will. Had it pleased God to create us different, in any important respect, from what we now are, or to place us in relations different from those which we now sustain, a different course of conduct from that which we are now required to pursue would have been our duty. But why so? Because, we answer, it would be in accordance with that will of God, which had made us to differ from what we now are. We adhere then to the position, that an action is right because it is in accordance with the will of God, and we contend that we are to regard our natures and our relations but as manifestations of God's will, indications, given in our very creation, of the course of conduct which it is his will that we should pursue. This question does not then, we repeat, relate to the ultimate foundation of duty. For all do in reality, if not in name and form, regard the will of God as remotely, if not directly, the foundation of duty.

Still further, the question at issue does not relate to the only, nor yet to the best, way of ascertaining the will of God. All admit that the will of God may be made known in various ways. All admit that in regard to many points his will has been made known, expressly revealed through a long succession of prophets, and lastly and more fully by his son Christ Jesus. And all admit too, that where revelation speaks directly in

regard to any course, either by express command or by direct prohibition of the contrary course, we have no further question to ask as to what is the will of God. Let it be borne in mind in this discussion that direct revelation, wherever given, makes known the will of God, that the will of God, whenever known, determines the course of duty, and that the course of duty, once determined, closes the subject against all questions of expediency.

Finally, the question at issue does not relate to general principles of conduct, but to specific acts of duty. It is not, whether, in studying the general principles of conduct, we are to seek for right in the abstract. The correctness and importance of this course all admit. It is whether, in any specific act, we are to be governed by a single regard to what we have discovered to be right in the abstract, or are to take into consideration, in connexion with and serving to modify this, the peculiar circumstances of our situation and the probable consequences of our conduct.

We have thus endeavoured to free the question from others nearly related to it and often confounded with it. We come now to the question itself. And here we may remark, first, that, in regard to specific duties, the phrase *right in the abstract*, or the more popular phrase used to express the same thing, the eternal and unchangeable principles of rectitude, conveys to our mind no definite idea. We know not how to apply it to specific duties. It seems to us a fiction of the brain, or a mere generalization made for convenience, having no real, positive existence among living and moving and acting men, men sustaining a great variety of ever-varying relations; men of every possible shade of difference in mental capacity and moral susceptibility, in talent and temperament; men, the circumstances of whose existence and the grounds of whose duty are continually changing. We may indeed picture to ourselves a certain course of conduct, which we should regard as right in the abstract. But, when this is done, what has been the real basis of our conclusion? Have we not in our imagination pictured to ourselves some supposed circumstances in which this course of conduct is to be pursued? And do not these supposed circumstances, including, as they do, the talents, temperament, relations, and situation, constitute the grounds of the peculiarity of our conclusion, or, in other words, render our conclusion precisely what it is? We may not be conscious that we are reasoning from

fixed and definite supposed circumstances. But if we attempt to reduce our conclusions to practice in any particular cases of actual conduct, in any peculiar circumstances of real life, we shall find that it is not applicable. And why? Because the circumstances, from a reference to which the conclusion was drawn, and which give it its peculiar form and character, are different from those to which we attempt to apply it.

But it may be said, that by the phrase *right in the abstract* is meant what is right for man simply as man, without reference to any peculiarity in talents, temperament, relations, or circumstances. But this, it will be perceived, upon a moment's reflection, is but a change of ground, not an escape from the difficulty. For it is only divesting man of all the peculiarities ordinarily attaching to him. But the very circumstance of his being divested of these, constitutes a new and strange peculiarity. The conclusions, and principles, and rules, which would be applicable to him under this peculiarity, would not be applicable to him in the ordinary circumstances of actual life. If this then be a correct idea of right in the abstract, it is rendered still more evident than before that it is a mere fiction of the brain, that it has not and cannot have a real and positive existence in any community of living and acting men. For, the moment you place men together in a community, you place them in the midst of a great variety of relations, the peculiarities of which are ever changing; consequently, the conclusion as to which is right in the abstract is no longer applicable. Since, then, men do not exist in the abstract, divested of all peculiarity of talent, temperament, circumstance or relation, but are placed under every variety in these respects, and subjected to a constant succession of changes in the grounds of duty, there is and there can be no such thing as right in the abstract in regard to specific duties.

But, even if there be such a thing as right in the abstract in regard to specific duties, no one of the human race is capable of ascertaining, with infallible certainty, what that is. We are so constituted, that we can view duty only through the medium of our temperaments and circumstances and interests and prejudices. Here are two individuals engaged in conversation upon the great moral evils which prevail in the community and threaten its best interests. The one is calm and cheerful, fully aware indeed of the real nature and dangerous tendency of the evils upon which they are conversing, but, at the same time,

perfectly confident as to the favorable character of the final issue. The other is much excited upon the subject. He dwells upon the darkest aspect which the times present, and is filled with despondency as to the future. These two individuals would differ materially as to the course of conduct, which they might think the state of the times demanded; and their difference of opinion would arise from their different constitutional temperaments. This same cause, difference in constitutional temperament, would produce a similar difference of opinion in regard to the course of conduct, which would be regarded as right in the abstract. Again, if you travel through the land and listen to the conversation which occurs in the public conveyances, you will perceive a great difference of feeling and opinion in regard to the comparative magnitude of the different evils which are supposed to threaten the community. One regards the spread and increase of the Roman Catholics as the greatest and most fearful source of danger, and, consequently, he thinks that the whole energies of the community should be concentrated and put forth in opposition to this evil. Another regards the existence of slavery as the dark cloud which portends the destruction of our liberties, and wonders that men can think of or direct their exertions to any other object than the removal of this great evil. A third is of opinion that the temperance cause is the great philanthropic movement of the day, which should enlist the warmest affections and call forth the most strenuous exertions of every friend of man. Now why this difference of opinion? These individuals are, it may be, men of equal intellectual power; they are equally honest, and equally unconscious of being under the influence of any prejudice or undue bias in any particular direction. Why then this difference of feeling and opinion? Is it not because these different individuals have been placed in different circumstances, and have looked at the question of duty from different positions and through different mediums? Still further, here is one engaged in some lucrative branch of business, which is thought, by many, to be injurious to the best interests of the community. Of such an one, it is often said that he is so blinded by a regard for his own interest that he cannot distinguish the path of duty. This may be, and in many cases it undoubtedly is, true. But it may be equally true that those, who object to this branch of business, have become so deeply interested in some particular cause, and so strongly prejudiced against every thing which

may oppose the rapid progress of that cause, as to be unable to judge impartially. It may be, that while the one looks at the question of duty through the medium of self-interest, the other looks at it through the equally blinding medium of party attachment or individual prejudice. In all these cases there is an honest difference of opinion in regard to questions of duty. And the truth illustrated by them will hold true in regard to the question of right in the abstract. For we shall view even that question through the medium of our circumstances, temperaments, interests, and prejudices, and, consequently, we are none of us capable of ascertaining, with infallible certainty, the course which may be right in the abstract. Who of us will say that he is so free from any undue bias, so free from prejudice, so impartial in his feelings, and has such a thorough knowledge of all the elements necessary to the formation of a correct opinion, that he can, in all cases, judge with infallible certainty?

But this position is confirmed by another circumstance. We are all tenacious of our own opinions, unwilling that others should judge for us upon questions of duty. But why not? If there be, in regard to all our specific duties, such a thing as right in the abstract, by which we are to be guided, and we are capable of ascertaining what this is, with infallible certainty, why may not one decide for another, a few decide for all? Why then are we unwilling, and why is it improper that another should judge for us upon questions of duty? Is it not because abstract principles must be modified in their application to specific duties, according to the circumstances under which these duties are to be performed, and because others, though equally honest with ourselves, are looking at the question of duty from a different point of view, are not in our position, and cannot look through the same medium through which we are looking? We may both agree in regard to the abstract principles of moral conduct, and we may allow that we ourselves are utterly unable to determine for others what course of conduct these general principles may require of them in their peculiar circumstances, while we deny that they are able to determine the same question for us. If then there be in regard to specific duties such a thing as right in the abstract, it is something altogether beyond the reach of our capacities. We may suppose indeed that, if there be such a thing, it is what appears to be right to the eye of Omniscience, because that eye can survey at one glance all the possible circumstances and consequences of an

act. Whenever, then, the Almighty, the omniscient and eternal Jehovah, declares, by direct revelation, a certain course to be essentially and eternally right, it becomes finite and short-sighted man to submit. But in other cases, each one must judge for himself, according to the best of his knowledge and ability. And as we may suppose that Omniscience itself determines what is right in the abstract, not by looking at man divested of all peculiarity, of talent, temperament, situation, or circumstance, but by surveying, at once, all possible circumstances, and all the nearer and more remote consequences, so we are to endeavour to learn the course of duty not by looking at ourselves as divested of all peculiarities, but by ascertaining in each particular case all its peculiar circumstances, and all the nearer and more remote probable consequences, and by so modifying our general principles as to bring them into an accordance with these.

But if the two positions, which we have already laid down, be correct, we may remark, further, that not only are we permitted, but that, from the very constitution of our natures, we are compelled to have recourse to the question of expediency, to consult the peculiar circumstances of the case, and to inquire for the probable consequences of the act, in order to determine what is duty. To pursue any other course is an absolute impossibility. He who thinks that he is pursuing a different course, that he is forming an impartial judgment upon questions of duty, from a single regard to right in the abstract, is only deceiving himself. Whether he may be aware of it or not, his judgment is in fact influenced by his peculiar temperament, by the prejudices of his education, by the circumstances in which he is placed. By these and by a thousand other influences to which he is exposed, is his judgment liable to be warped. That we are thus compelled to modify general rules by a regard to the circumstances of the case in regard to specific duties, may be made clearly manifest by the following illustrations. What would seem more unnatural, nay, what more sinful, when viewed in relation to the question of abstract right and without regard to circumstances, than for a parent to shut out from the community of his fellow-men the son of his affections? But when that son becomes a maniac, whose liberty would be injurious to the community, it becomes the solemn duty of the parent. What more unnatural, what more sinful, than for a child to refuse obedience to the father who has watched over him, and even

to exercise a master's authority over one, whom, in the course of nature, he should only venerate? But that father may, by intemperance, become a madman, or a brute, and then it may be the solemn duty, unpleasant though it be, of the son not only to disobey his command, but also to exercise authority over him. These, we are aware, are extreme cases. But they serve to illustrate our principle. Right in the abstract in regard to the duties of parents and children is based upon some supposed circumstances which are taken for granted, and when these circumstances are changed, the general principles of duty based upon them must be modified to meet the peculiar circumstances in which the specific acts of duty are to be performed; and consequently the course to be pursued is to be determined, not by dwelling upon the general principles themselves, in the abstract view of them, but by inquiring carefully for the peculiar features of the case. It may be said, that no one objects to a careful examination of all the circumstances peculiar to any particular case of duty, but that it is entirely different in regard to the probable consequences of any particular act; that with these we have nothing to do, no inquiry to make. "Duty is ours, events are God's," is the maxim with which the mouth is shut. But, in answer, we ask, first, what is meant by an examination of the circumstances, other than an inquiry as to what will be the probable result of a course of conduct pursued under these circumstances? We answer, again, that the maxim, "Duty is ours, events are God's," is true and valuable wherever it is found to be applicable, but that it does not apply to the question before us. This question supposes the course of duty to be doubtful, and it is contended that we are to inquire into probable consequences in order to ascertain what is duty, not to determine what may be the result of a course which we are satisfied is duty. And it seems to us that on this point there can be no question. An act may be performed to-day, which, on account of some known circumstances, we have every reason to believe, will result in disastrous consequences. But, at the same time, there may be strong ground to hope, and even to believe, that there will be such a change in the circumstances as will cause the proposed act, if postponed for a few days, to be beneficial in all its bearings. If then we are in doubt as to what is duty, and there is every reason to believe that one course will be followed by beneficial, and its opposite by disastrous consequences, this circumstance,

other things being equal, should determine us in favor of the one course rather than the other. Our conclusion, then, is that in regard to specific duties we are permitted, nay, bound, to inquire carefully for all the peculiar circumstances of the case, and to judge, as well as we may, in regard to the probable consequences of the act, that so we may learn in what way and to what degree the general principles of abstract right and wrong are to be modified in their particular applications.

But we will not close our discussion with this conclusion, drawn from an examination of the question by the light of reason alone. For the question, we are aware, will arise in the minds of Christians, "Is this conclusion in accordance with the general spirit and tenor of gospel instructions?" To us it seems that our conclusions do harmonize with one prominent and striking peculiarity of the gospel. We allude to the fact that our Saviour lays down no positive cases in regard to specific duties. Had he attempted this, it is more than probable that his code would have taken its character from Jewish peculiarities. At least it must have been expressed in language drawn from these peculiarities, which would have given it a Jewish tinge. But our Saviour laid down general principles, and left it for each individual to determine for himself and from his own peculiar circumstances, in what manner these principles are to be applied to his own specific duties. He does not, for example, specify any particular acts of duty to be performed towards our neighbour, and enjoin the performance of them as a positive and unalterable duty. But he does lay down a general principle, which no true follower of his should ever violate. He says, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This is a principle of general, of universal application. It may be applied in a later as well as in an earlier age of the Christian church, in America as well as in Judea. But, in the application of this principle to the specific duties of neighbourly kindness, each individual is permitted, because from the very nature of the case he is compelled to judge for himself, from the peculiar circumstances of his situation. Take another instance. "Do unto others as ye would have them do unto you." This, like the last, is a general principle of universal application. And here, too, as before, each individual must judge for himself and from his own circumstances, in what way it is to be applied to his own specific duties. The distinction which we make may, in regard to these two principles, be clearly seen from an illus-

tration. No man, for example, has a right to ask whether it be expedient or useful to love his neighbour as himself, to do unto others as he would have them do unto him. These are abstract principles of duty, settled by an authority higher than the most certain conclusions of reason. But every individual has a right, and is in duty bound, to ask whether these general principles require him to conduct towards his neighbour, in any particular case, in this way or in that. A fellow-man calls at our door to solicit charity. We may not say that we are not bound to love this individual as ourselves, to do unto him as we would have him, in an exchange of circumstances, do unto us. But we may, indeed, we ought, to ask in what way our love should in this particular case be manifested. Or, to take a case in regard to which much has been said in some of our papers. When Dr. Ely met the slave Ambrose, he had no right to say, "I am not bound to regard this man as my neighbour, to love him as myself, to do unto him as I should wish him, in an exchange of circumstances, to do unto me." But he had a right, and was in duty bound, to ask how these general principles were to be applied to this particular case, this specific act. And this question he must of necessity determine by looking at the peculiar circumstances of the case, and inquiring for the probable consequences of the various courses which might be suggested. We have brought forward two general principles, and illustrated the manner in which they are to be applied to specific duties. If these may be regarded as specimens of the general spirit and tenor of gospel instructions, we trust that our conclusion will not be found to be in opposition to them.

The length to which our discussion has already extended, reminds us that we should be drawing our remarks to a close. But we cannot refrain from adding one practical inference. It relates to the mode in which we are to approach those who may differ from us upon questions of duty. Our first step is to investigate and establish, as far as we may be able, the general and abstract principles of duty. These will, in most cases, approve themselves to the minds of all. Should there be a difference on general and abstract principles, it can be settled only by the superior weight of argument in favor of one side or the other, or by a change of feelings in the individuals so differing. But the differences, which most generally prevail, relate to the application of general principles to specific duties. We should approach one who may differ from us on this point not merely by

a declaration of what we may regard as right in the abstract, and of the obligations he is under to conform to this, without reference to his peculiar circumstances. Much less are we to approach him in bitter denunciation, because he does not at once adopt the course we may point out. If we take this course, we shall labor in vain. Our fellow man is our equal. He will not admit our authority nor our ability to interpret questions of duty for him, and the very attempt to do this, on our part, will only excite a prejudice against us. On the contrary, would we approach one who differs from us on questions of duty, with hope of success, we must start with the admission that he is to judge for himself, is the only person capable of judging, and that he must judge from the various peculiarities of his own situation. Then we should throw ourselves, as far as possible, into his circumstances, and enter into his feelings, that so we may view the subject from the same position from which he views it, and look at it through the same medium. In this way we are to seek for the obstacles which present themselves to his mind, that we may allow them their full weight, or show them to be unworthy of regard. And thus by meeting him in all kindness and love upon his own ground, and arguing with him upon his own premises, we may, perhaps, convince him of the propriety of the course we are pursuing, and persuade him to unite with us.

In regard to the subject of slavery, for example, we are first to seek for the general and abstract principles of duty. Taking these for our guide, we are to approach the slaveholder with the admission, that, in the application of the general principles to the specific acts of duty which are required of him, he is himself the only judge, because he only understands all the peculiarities of the case. And then we are to place ourselves, as far as may be, in his circumstances, to study and enter into all his feelings, that so we may know just how the subject presents itself to his mind, just what obstacles and difficulties he discovers, that so we may, in all brotherly kindness, meet him upon his own ground, and argue with him from premises, the correctness of which he himself admits. This is the point where Abolitionists have failed. They have investigated carefully, and stated strongly, the general and abstract principles of duty upon the subject. But they have overlooked the distinction between the investigation and statement of these, and the application of them to particular cases and specific duties.

And the recognition of this distinction is what we regard as one of the peculiar excellences of Dr. Channing's work upon Slavery. He has, indeed, stated the general and abstract principles which bear upon the subject in a most convincing manner, and has given a touching picture of the evils of slavery. But all this had been done before, by other, though as we think feebler, pens. It had been done, but not, as we think, in a manner so well calculated to allay the passions while it convinced the understanding and touched the heart. But the point in which Dr. Channing differs from and excels other writers upon the subject, is in the recognition of the distinction between the investigation and statement of general principles and the application of these principles to specific acts of duty. His chapter upon the means of removing slavery begins thus. "How slavery shall be removed is a question for the slaveholder, and one which he alone can fully answer. He alone has an intimate knowledge of the habits and character of the slaves, to which the means of emancipation should be carefully adapted. General principles may and should be suggested at a distance; but the mode of applying them can be understood only upon the spot where the evil exists." Thus, after having suggested general principles, Dr. Channing approaches the slaveholder, as we think every one should, with the distinct admission that he is to judge for himself in regard to the application of these principles, because these general principles must be modified in their application to particular cases and specific duties by the circumstances under which these duties are to be performed, and of these none can judge so well as those who are in the midst of them, and are consequently intimately acquainted with all their peculiarities.

So, too, it seems to us that the association formed in Boston, and called "The American Union for the Relief and Improvement of the Colored Race," has adopted more correct views than the Abolitionists. They agree with the Abolitionists in regard to the abstract question, the general principles. But they recognise the truth of the position we have endeavoured to maintain, that these general principles are to be modified in their application to specific duties. They state distinctly their opinion in regard to the general principles. But they do not approach the slaveholder with bitter denunciations for not at once acting in accordance with them. Their wish is to approach him in kindness and with inquiries, to learn what are

the peculiar circumstances of the case, what the particular obstacles which present themselves to the mind of a slaveholder. It is, in short, their endeavour to throw themselves as far as possible into the very circumstances of those who are called upon to act, — that so they may be the better able to judge of the duty required, — that so they may be able to meet the slaveholder upon his own ground, and reason with him upon premises, the correctness of which he himself admits.

In conclusion we would say, we have spoken because we have feared that amidst the excitement and agitation which are abroad, first principles are lost sight of, and because we have thought it important to call the attention of our readers to an examination of them. We cannot but express the hope, that, whether our remarks themselves may attract attention or not, the subject upon which we have spoken will secure the deep and careful thought of all engaged in the great moral and benevolent movements of the day.

J. W.

Portland, Maine.

ART. III. — *Text-Book of Ecclesiastical History*. By J. C.

I. GIESELER, Doctor of Philosophy and Theology, and Professor of Theology in Gottingen. Translated from the third German Edition, by FRANCIS CUNNINGHAM. Philadelphia: Carey, Lea, and Blanchard. 1836. 3 vols. 8vo.

THE want of some better text-book of ecclesiastical history, than has been heretofore in use among us, has been long felt. After all the labor expended on Mosheim's "Institutes," by Dr. Murdock, for which we are disposed to allow him full credit, the work is not suited to the purpose of the historical student. We agree with Professor Sears, who says that "it can no longer be used." Neander's work, however great its merit in other respects, is not to be thought of as a text-book. That, as the writer just quoted accurately observes, "has another design, — Guericke's is too polemical and unattractive, and Hase's is too brief."* We hesitate not to say, with

* Prof. Sears, of the Newton Theological Institution. See commendatory notices prefixed to Mr. Cunningham's translation of Gieseler.

Professor Sears, that the manual of Gieseler is the most perfect text-book before the public. We think that Mr. Cunningham has done wisely in selecting it for translation, in preference to others which may have offered themselves to his choice; and by the very successful execution of his task, by no means a light one, he has laid the American public under lasting obligations to him.

The publication, too, we regard as peculiarly seasonable, not simply because it supplies a want which, as we have said, has been long felt, but as it may possibly serve to excite an interest in the study of ecclesiastical history; the result of which may be to show, that what, in modern times, often passes for discoveries, is only a reproduction of old ideas, which, as it had been supposed, had long ago accomplished their mission, and disappeared. In truth, the importance of the study of ecclesiastical history is now, as we are disposed to think, greatly underrated. Much as there is of bigotry and narrowness in the age, which the lessons derived from the past should have the effect of mitigating or removing, there is also much that is visionary, speculative, fantastic, dreamy, and unsubstantial. But in this there is nothing new. The old Alexandrine Platonists were as arrant dreamers, as the world ever knew, and were as confident, as any "since born," of the superior claims of what, for want of a better term, we suppose, we may call the Philosophy of Intuition. It was part of the true *gnosis*. Both the philosophical and the Christian Gnostics supposed "all essential truth" to be derived from "direct inward perception," and looked with contempt on all knowledge received through the medium of the senses.*

The work of Professor Gieseler has met with very signal success in Germany, and certainly possesses many excellences, which render it eminently suited to the purpose for which it was prepared. The first object of solicitude with the historian must be, the Sources from which he is to derive his materials. In search for these he must be thorough; he must gather around him all the remains of the times about which he is writing; he must be familiar with every existing monument of those times; and to a minute knowledge of their literary and historical

* A good history of Oriental Mysticism, especially in the form it assumed among the Egyptian Platonists, is much needed. A little of this mysticism occasionally comes to us reflected from modern writers of the French and German school.

relics, he must add an intimate acquaintance with modern researches and labors; he must glean from every obscure corner and nook of the field. If he fail in this, he at once forfeits a title to our confidence, since, however honest or skilful he may be in the use of the materials before him, the neglect of others, capable of throwing light on his subject, may essentially affect the accuracy of his statements. In a work like that under consideration, such want of thoroughness would be absolutely fatal.

In regard to his Sources, whether, to use his own classifications, consisting in "Testimonies, Documents, or Monuments," Professor Gieseler seems properly to have estimated the duty of the historian, and has left us nothing to desire. "The aim of the ecclesiastical historian," he says, should be "to get at facts directly from the Sources." In judging of Sources, however, great discrimination is necessary, and he has need particularly of skill in historical criticism, to enable him to decide on their "genuineness, integrity, and credibility, not only in general, but in each particular case." In this respect, as well as in the one just mentioned, we believe that the student in ecclesiastical history will find in Gieseler a very safe guide. He does not boldly, with a dash of the pen, knock away authorities, in a manner suited to an arbitrary humor; yet he shows himself perfectly aware, that they nowhere require to be sifted with so much caution as in the department in which he is laboring, as truth is nowhere so liable to be distorted by ignorance, credulity, prejudice, narrow-mindedness, and even "intentional dishonesty." We have forged documents enough, and others which evidently misrepresent, or speak falsely; and he who would thread the mazes of ecclesiastical history, has need of peculiar sagacity, and in the absence of light must often resort to conjectures, which, says Gieseler, "may be sometimes so supported by the connexion of events, analogy, the character of the time and of individuals, and even by the tenor of the very statements he judges to be false, as to fall little short of certainty; though often, perhaps, hardly more than possibilities." * This is just and candid. No one is less disposed than Gieseler to make an unwarrantable use of conjecture, yet no one can be further removed from every thing bordering on credulity. His honesty is above suspicion; he manifests no sectarian bias; at the same time he is fully sensible of the importance in an ecclesiastical

* Vol. I. p. 10.

historian of a "truly religious spirit," without which "he cannot hope to penetrate into the inward character of the events he exhibits; it being universally true that he can never rightly understand the state of another's mind, who cannot reproduce it in his own."*

With respect to the disposition and use of his materials, we think that Gieseler has shown much judgment. One great merit of his work consists in the principle of distribution, a grouping, if we may so express ourselves, which he adopts. The old methods of chronological arrangement according to years or centuries, he, in common with most recent historians, discards. Indeed, however convenient this arrangement may be in some respects, it must constantly embarrass the writer, and has the effect of breaking up his narration into a series of disconnected fragments, which can be read with neither pleasure nor profit.

Gieseler makes four periods, or divisions; the first extending to the time of Constantine, and embracing the history of the church under oppression; the second, from that time to the beginning of the "picture controversy," or controversy concerning the worship of images, A. D. 324 — 726, containing the history of Christianity "as the prevailing religion of the state"; the third from thence to the Reformation, containing the history of the "papal power in its predominance"; the fourth, the history of Protestantism.

It will be perceived, at once, that some further divisions are necessary; that these long periods must be broken up into smaller ones. In doing this, Professor Gieseler has regarded partly to the chronological order of events, especially during the earlier ages, and before the internal relations of the church were sufficiently developed for the purpose; afterwards he makes use chiefly of these. To the internal relations of the church belong the history of its faith, or doctrines; their practical influence, or the religious and moral life of Christians; their theoretical developement, or the history of the theological sciences; the character of public religious exercises, rites, and usages; and constitutions of church government. These serve very well to distinguish the minor divisions, as not only each period, but, generally, its several parts, have their prevailing ecclesiastical character. To seize

*Vol. I. p. 10.

on this character, to fix on the principle or element which is peculiarly developed at any particular time, and which is of sufficient importance to mark the era, is, of course, matter for the exercise of the historian's sagacity, and it is a task which is sometimes attended with no small difficulty. We think that Professor Gieseler has performed this task with good success. His divisions and subdivisions rest on some real and important, and not mere fanciful distinctions, a circumstance which the student in history will duly appreciate.

Prefixed to the several periods and the more important divisions and subdivisions, we have an enumeration of the Sources and Authorities chiefly relied on, more particular references being given in the foot-notes to the several pages. These references, says the author, "cannot, of course, claim to be complete. The aim has been to mention the best works on each subject, and also such as are historically remarkable." For all ordinary purposes of the student, certainly, they are sufficiently full. The translator has added a few, more particularly to English authorities, by which he has done good service.

But what gives the work a decided advantage over others, as a text-book, and constitutes, in fact, its most conspicuous merit, is the plan adopted in regard to the *narrative* portion, and the *extracts*. The former is exceedingly brief and condensed, though, we believe, it leaves no topic, of sufficient importance to claim notice in a general history, untouched. It presents an entire view of the whole field, carefully mapped out, the general course of events being distinctly laid down, and due prominence given to objects deserving of particular attention. But the narration is not encumbered by any dry disquisitions, though occasionally "a short sketch is attempted of the various views given by different parties of important sects in the church." The *extracts* are given in the foot-notes, and generally fill up the greater part of the page. They are from original Sources and Authorities, and are designed, as the author expresses it, "either to prove something which on historical or dogmatical grounds has been held doubtful, or to explain what is obscure, or, lastly, on account of their intrinsic historical importance."*

Some of the advantages of this plan are obvious. If the

* Preface, p. iv.

accuracy of the writer is to be relied on, (as in the present case, we suppose, with some few exceptions, it may,) the student is saved the labor of turning to a multitude of volumes, no small task, if they are readily accessible, which is not often the case, especially with us, in this country, which contains few large collections public or private. The book, being designed to be used as a manual simply, of course does not supersede the necessity of further research; yet on all points on which it may be desirable for one to extend his inquiries, it will be found, from the peculiar principle upon which it is formed, to afford great help.

In histories constructed after the ordinary method, we must take the writer's report of the sense of the document from which he obtains his facts, or views; the passage relied on not being given, we must trust wholly to his eye and judgment. Now it is very possible that he may misconceive the sense of the passage, or in translating it, or transferring its substance into his own language, he may select terms which do not convey to the mind of the reader the exact shade of meaning contained in the original. We want the original, that we may have an opportunity of interpreting it for ourselves. It is then no longer the historian who speaks; the age of which he discourses is allowed to speak for itself, the writer sustaining, in some sort, the character of a guide, who merely furnishes general directions, and conducts the student to the points most favorable for observation, leaving him to see and judge for himself.

That the amount of service rendered to the historical student in this way is very great, it needs no labored argument to prove. Whether we regard distinctness of impression, or accuracy, the advantage is obvious and striking. And yet even upon Gieseler's principle, of giving extracts in support of particular views, or facts, or supposed facts, there is room for error; for partial extracts may mislead. We think that a few of Gieseler's statements are made incautiously, and will not bear the test of examination. To mention an instance, he imputes to Origen the doctrine of the *eternal* generation of the Son. Now we are satisfied that such was not the doctrine of the Ante-Nicene fathers generally, and certainly not of Origen, as may be clearly proved by a careful inspection of his writings, however a few expressions he employs may seem, at first view, to favor the contrary supposition. Then we think

that he attributes a great deal too much to this father, when he ascribes to him the merit of having "reinstated grammatical interpretation in its rights." It is true Origen admits that the Scriptures have a literal or historical, as well as a moral and a mystical sense; but then he is continually setting aside the literal to make way for the mystical, as more sublime, or more worthy of the Deity, and his canons of criticism and interpretation we suppose will now find few advocates.

Such, in few words, are the plan and arrangement of Gieseler's book, and they will recommend themselves, we are persuaded, to all who are competent to decide on the subject, as entitling the work to a decided preference, as a text-book of ecclesiastical history, to those at present in use among us. With the execution we profess ourselves, in the main, to be entirely satisfied. The method is clear, and the style perspicuous; and the great learning of the author; his critical skill, and truly German diligence; his remarkable candor and impartiality, which constitute a somewhat rare endowment of the ecclesiastical historian, give him a peculiar claim to our confidence, and must render his volumes, on which Mr. Cunningham has labored, as we think, with eminent success, an invaluable acquisition to the American student, to whatever class of Christians he belongs. As a manual, the book should take the place of all others of the kind, and should be adopted, at once, in all our seminaries for theological education. We could wish to see it on the table of every theological student in our country.

A work of this character can hardly be supposed to furnish many passages suitable for extract. We will attempt, however, to glean a few. The following relate to the distinctive characters assumed by the theology of the East and of the West, chiefly during the third century. The author commences with a notice of the Alexandrian School.

"In the period before us," says he, "the doctrines of the church were developed chiefly at Alexandria, at that time the seat of the sciences, where the Catholic teachers, brought into constant collision with Heathen and Heretics, were forced to enter more philosophically into the Christian doctrines. In this highly-cultivated city, the necessity of something more than the usual instruction of Catechumens had been very early felt, as well for the philosophical proselytes, as for those who were in future to become teachers. In this manner, no doubt, distinguished men had often drawn around

them great numbers of pupils; and thus prepared the way for the institution of the *Alexandrian Catechetical School*, which, beginning just before the time of which we are speaking, was now at the height of its prosperity, and through its distinguished teachers, Pantænus, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origenes, Heraclas, Dionysius, (Pierius and Theognostus?), was the source of all the advances made in Christian theology during this period. The Alexandrian school took its peculiar character from its very earliest teachers. Of Pantænus, indeed, we know nothing further than his name, and can only judge of him by his pupil Titus Flavius Clemens, on whose writings this character is plainly stamped. He presided over the school from the year 191 to 202, fled from the city in the persecution under Severus, and probably came back again afterwards, (died about 220). But these peculiarities were first fully developed and matured by the great Origen, the son of the martyr Leonidas, (died 202). At the early age of eighteen he was a catechumen at the school in Alexandria, and had a high reputation abroad. But in the year 228 he offended his bishop, Demetrius, by being consecrated as Presbyter at Cæsarea, and, after his removal thither, was soon excluded by Demetrius from communion with the church for his peculiar opinions. The churches in Palestine, Arabia, and Achaia paid no regard, however, to this measure of Demetrius, and Origen not only continued to act as Presbyter, but likewise gave instruction in the sciences."—Vol. i. pp. 134–136.

The Alexandrine school of *philosophy*, the author observes, was "held in high esteem, not only as having been to the Heathen, what the law was to the Jews, a preparation for Christianity, but as the only means of penetrating the hidden spirit of its doctrines." This *gnosis* was to be concealed from the vulgar; it was handed down as a mystery; and even Origen, though more free than others in speaking of the secret doctrines, sometimes manifests a hesitation, and is very explicit in his warnings that "these things are not to be promiscuously told to the people." The author proceeds.

"Two great principles run through the whole of the Alexandrian theology. The one, that all anthropopathic (*borrowed from human nature*) notions of God must be carefully avoided, is seen in their constant efforts to purify the doctrines of religion from every thing earthly and material; the other, that man is without any limitation a morally free being, and that the condition of all morally free beings depends entirely on themselves, led to still more striking results.

"The most remarkable of their doctrines are the following:

"1. That the Godhead can never be unemployed: so that an

endless series of worlds preceded the present, and an endless series of worlds will follow it.

"2. That all intellectual beings (angels, stars, men, demons) were originally created alike, and none of them without a body, as this is the peculiar attribute of the Deity. Some of them having sinned, God created the world and banished the fallen spirits into bodies, more or less gross, according to the degree of their sinfulness. Still they all retain their moral freedom, and are able, if they will, to rise again from their degraded state. Even the punishments of the damned are not eternal, but only remedial; whilst the Devil himself may reform and be pardoned. When the world shall have answered the purpose for which it was created, as the dwelling-place of fallen spirits, it will be destroyed by fire; and by this fire the soul will be purified from all the stains it may have contracted by its intimate union with the body. But, as spirits always retain their freedom, they may sin again; in which case a new world will be created for them.

"3. The Alexandrians speak of the Logos as a highly-exalted being, though their expressions are not always distinct. Evidently, however, they make him inferior to the Supreme God. The wish to remove every thing, that could be unworthy of God, from the notion of the generation of the Son, led at last to the doctrine taught by Origen, that the Logos did not proceed from the essence of the Father, but was produced by the will of God, generated from all eternity. He taught, also, that the Holy Ghost was created by the Son.

"4. The body assumed by the Logos, when it became man, was not of flesh, but of a nobler texture. According to Origen, it united itself not with a human body, but a human soul.

"5. The Alexandrians must of course have been averse to the doctrine of Chiliasm, which, as then held, was so contrary to their antimaterialism. Clement does not allude to it. Origen, however, opposes it openly, giving to the passages, which were thought to favor the doctrine, an allegorical interpretation.

"6. The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh was, with many Christians, founded on such exaggerated notions of the relative importance of the body in man, that some of them (the Arabians) actually held the soul as an accident, or quality, of the body. With the Alexandrians, on the other hand, to whom the body was only the prison-house of the spirit, it was a natural and consistent doctrine, that the soul would not resume its material body, but one of an incorruptible and far more glorious texture." — Vol. i. pp. 138 – 141.

The theology of the East thus became highly speculative and mutable, and the way was finally prepared for the ap-

pearance of Arianism, of which Lucian of Antioch "has been often considered the father, because he founded the school of Antioch, from which *Arius* and his most distinguished friends went out." In the West, theology wore a different aspect.

"After *Tertullian* had led the way in adapting the Latin language to the expression of Christian ideas, it soon came into very general use amongst Christians of the West; though much was still written in Greek, and even by *Tertullian* himself. But in proportion as the Greek language fell into disuse, the interest in the theology of the Greek church diminished. In consequence the Latin church remained stationary, and the gross material conceptions of the Greek theology, introduced by *Tertullian* in the second century, were still held fast in the third; — the Latins being too much prejudiced against philosophy, and, from their ignorance of the necessary languages, too unskilled in criticism to go forward of themselves. Thus the characteristics of the Western church at this time are an aversion to all theological speculation, and in doctrine a profound immobility which prevented all improvement, except what was unconsciously brought about by the movements in the Greek church.

"Whilst they rejected the peculiar tenets of the Montanists, they still retained the gross conceptions of Christianity, and the high estimation of external observances, by which this sect was distinguished. Hence their strong disposition to extend and develope the science of *Ecclesiastical Law*." — Vol. i. pp. 147, 148.

Again,

"The peculiarity of the theology of the Western church consisted in the gross material conception of the doctrines they had received from the East. This is seen even in their conception of God. They gave to the Deity a body, and the human soul they supposed to be literally his breath. They also retained the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, of the Millennium in its lowest form, of the damnation of all unbelievers, and of eternal punishment. With regard to the Logos, they retained the old Platonic notions, both as to its origin, the details of which they figured to themselves for the most part, according to the analogy of the senses, and as to its relation to the Father." — Vol. i. pp. 149, 150.

At a later period, the doctrines of Augustine, very nearly identical, as it is well known, with those of Calvinism, met with a very different reception in the East and the West. Having been approved by African synods, as well as by Zosimus, bishop of Rome, they became, says Gieseler, "the established faith of the Western church, but were never adopted by the

Greek church, which, from the first, had taken but little interest in the controversy." They were not altogether palatable, it seems, even in the West, for, says Gieseler,

"Although Augustine's doctrine of free grace had been adopted as the faith of the Western church, but few held to it in all its strictness. Its injurious practical consequences could not be overlooked, and were occasionally exemplified; and the monks, especially, were altogether opposed to a doctrine which took away all the merit of their monastic practices." — Vol. I. p. 226.

Gieseler traces with some distinctness the several steps by which freedom of inquiry was impaired, and finally extinguished in the church.

"In the beginning of this century the universally received articles of the Christian faith were few and simple, leaving ample room for different interpretations and the exercise of private judgment. How different were the various systems thereupon founded, may be seen by a comparison of the different schools which were now in existence, — the speculative school of Origen, the traditional, and the historico-critical school, which was, as yet, in its infancy. And even a greater contrast of systems was to be expected, from the speculative turn of the Greek Christians, which the cessation of the persecutions now left them free to indulge.

"Thus theological controversies became unavoidable; nor would this have been matter of regret, or have exerted any but a favorable influence, if the old distinction between *πίστις* and *γνώσις* had only been steadily kept in view, and points of theology not made matters of religion and church discipline. But the very simplicity of the old articles of faith tempted the disputants on either side to appeal to them, each, according to his own interpretation, accusing the other of heresy. This at once brought the question before the hierarchy, who claimed the exclusive right of deciding upon all questions of faith, and were always ready to seize upon any opportunity thus afforded them of interfering in the mere theological disputes of the day. And this tendency to pursue their own interest, they were now at less pains to disguise, inasmuch as they were left more free from the necessity of struggling against Paganism, and were at the same time supported by the strong arm of the state.

"Thus the religious controversies soon assumed a new character. Formerly, they were confined to particular provinces; but now they divided the whole Christian world. To end them, the emperors called general councils, whose decisions became the laws of the realm, and were enforced by the civil power. Formerly, the councils, which were assembled to judge of heretics, contented themselves with guarding against innovation; but now, the general

councils, invested with the highest ecclesiastical dignity, and supported by the imperial power, went on to erect their decisions on disputed points into positive articles of faith.* All this contributed to develop the system of doctrines with great rapidity, whilst the freedom of speculation had proportionably narrowed. At the same time the condemned parties were provoked to greater obstinacy, and the schisms in the church became wider and more incurable. These contests [not only had an important effect on the development of the internal relations of the church, but, from the share taken in them by the emperors, were also of great political moment. So that from this time forward, not only the whole history of the church, but often, also, the political history of the Roman empire, turns on the theological controversies." — Vol. I. pp. 191, 192.

The school of Origen was friendly to liberty.

"Of the theological schools of this period, the most distinguished were that of Origen, and the Syrian historico-exegetical school, both of which originated in the preceding period. Origen was universally held in high esteem, and to the wide-extended influence of his writings it is to be attributed, that, in the midst of these furious controversies, there remained any freedom of theological speculation whatever." — Vol. I. p. 207.

The result of the Arian controversy somewhat narrowed the field of investigation, though on other points, the utmost freedom of inquiry was permitted, during its continuance.

"A far greater danger now threatened all free inquiry and scientific research, from another side. In proportion as Monachism gained strength, the prejudice strengthened against all use of human science or learning. There arose a crowd of *traditional* theologians, who, rejecting all free investigation, would hear of no opinion which could not be found in the writings of the fathers. This character we see exemplified in Epiphanius, bishop of Constantia in Cyprus, from the year 367, (died 403). Even in his *Panarion* (hæc. 63 and 64) he betrays his bitter hatred of Origen; and as soon as the Arian controversy was at an end, he appeared as his open assailant. Whilst this new contest stopped the advance of theological science in the East, the Western world was bound in spiritual bondage by Augustine, and thus all free inquiry was banished from the church." — Vol. I. pp. 212, 213.

Superstition, of course, now increased apace. Of this, one variety consisted in Saint-worship, of the origin of which Gieseler gives the following account.

* Hilarius de Trinitate, II. 1."

"The more remote the times of the martyrs, the greater the adoration paid to them. The heathen converts, naturally enough, transferred to them the honors they had been used to pay their demigods, whilst the horror of creature-worship, which had hitherto operated as a check on the growing superstition, had been gradually dying away since the extinction of paganism. As men had long been accustomed to assemble for public worship at the graves of the martyrs, the idea of erecting churches (*Μαρτύριον*, Memoria) over them would readily occur. In Egypt the Christians began to embalm the bodies of reputed saints, and keep them in their houses. The communion with the martyrs being thus associated with the presence of their material remains, these were dug up from the graves and placed in the churches, especially under the altars; and the popular feeling having now a visible object to excite it, became more extravagant and superstitious than ever. The old opinion of the efficacy of their intercession, who had died a martyr's death, was now united with the belief that it was possible to communicate with them directly: a belief founded partly on the popular notion that departed souls always lingered around the bodies they had once inhabited, and partly on the views entertained of the glorified state of the martyrs, a sort of omnipresence being ascribed to them. These notions may be traced to Origen, and his followers were the first who apostrophized the martyrs in their sermons, and besought their intercession. But though the orators were somewhat extravagant in this respect, they were far outdone by the poets, who soon took up this theme, and could find no expressions strong enough to describe the power and the glory of the martyrs. Their relics soon began to work miracles, and to be valuable articles of trade.

"In proportion as men felt the need of such intercession, they sought to increase the number of the intercessors. Not only those, who, on account of services rendered the church, were inscribed in the Diptycha,* but the pious characters from the Old Testament, and the most distinguished of the monks, were ranked amongst the saints. Martyrs before unknown announced themselves in visions; others revealed the place of their burial. From the beginning of the 5th century the prayers for the saints were discontinued as unbefitting their glorified state. Christians were now but seldom called upon to address their prayers to God; the usual mode being to pray only to some saint for his intercession. With this worship of the saints were joined many of the customs of the

* Diptycha. A double catalogue, in one part whereof were written the names of the living, and in the other those of the dead, which were to be rehearsed during the office. *Rees' Cyclop.*—Tr."

heathen. Men chose their patron saints, and dedicated churches to their worship. The heathen, whom the Christians used to reproach with worshipping dead men, found now ample opportunity of retort." — Vol. I. pp. 282-287.

The commencement of the Reformation attempted, and partially, though but partially, achieved by Luther and his coadjutors, dates as far back as the fourteenth century. On this subject Gieseler expresses himself as follows.

"In proportion as the papal power became more irresistible and fearful, the heretical parties assumed more and more the character of fanaticism, and, despairing of any reformation within the church, sought to lay the foundations of their religious faith without it. But the power of the popes being thus diminished, a more rational spirit of reform was developed in the church itself, which, acknowledging the church as the true foundation of Christian faith, sought only to purify it from the abuses that had crept in.

"In these attempts at reform there was, however, an essential difference. For the most part they aimed only at external reformation; seeking, namely, to set bounds to the papal power, and to restore the discipline and virtue of the clergy, without going deeper into the sources of the evil. The *Mystics* were nearer the truth in avoiding the over estimation of externals, and endeavouring to revive inward religion. But, on the other hand, they were too exclusively engaged in the pursuit of their peculiar object, and their religion was of too transcendental and dreamy a character to allow them accurately to examine, and rightly to understand the general state of the church.

"The true Reformers were distinguished by this: — that they looked for the evil not in single abuses, but in the pervading spirit; and this spirit it was their aim to renovate. Amongst these "*testes veritatis*," many, no doubt, have been since reckoned by Protestants, who did not deserve such honor, and of others we have only passing and imperfect notices; still the 14th century can boast of many whose right to be so reckoned is beyond dispute. The foremost of these are three of the Bohemian clergy, who, fired with pious indignation at the mechanical worship and the dead hypocrisy which prevailed, directed their undaunted attacks against the Mendicant monks, to whose influence they chiefly ascribed this corruption." — Vol. III. pp. 135, 136.

The three Bohemian clergy alluded to, are Conrad Stiekna, John Milicz, and Matthias von Janow, all cotemporaries with the English Wicliffe. During the next century individual reformers became numerous, some of whom were left

undisturbed, and were permitted to end their days in peace. "However the views taken of the abuses in the church may have differed, the feeling of the necessity of a reform," says Gieseler, "was general. It is not surprising that the wish should often have ripened into a hope, and this into confident expectation, and this again have expressed itself in prophecy." The study of ancient literature hastened the result.

"The great benefit supposed to be derived from the study of the ancients was the cultivation of the taste, and in pursuing this it was not heeded how great must be the influence of this often extravagant love of the ancients in weakening men's attachment to the church; nor, on the other hand, what means as well as excitement were thus furnished to perilous investigations of the prevailing doctrines and views." — Vol. III. pp. 393, 394.

In Italy no direct attack was made on the church, though the scholastic philosophy, which was its main prop, fell, being unable to sustain the ridicule which was thrown upon it, especially on its "barbarous epithets, and its mistaken reverence for Aristotle."

"In Germany the study of the ancients led to widely different results as regarded its effect on theology. These studies were first introduced in the schools of the Brethren of the Common Life. In these schools every thing was valued according to its influence on religion, in which light therefore this new source of knowledge was chiefly regarded; and this view, so well suited to the earnest religious character of the nation, continued to be held by most of the German Humanists." — Vol. III. pp. 397, 398.

The Scholastics made a desperate struggle; but, not being a match for the Humanists in the use of the weapons of wit and ridicule, they were finally driven from the field.

"Thus by the revival of ancient learning the most important means of reformation in the church were prepared; but learning alone could not accomplish the work. The results thus obtained could neither be brought home to the convictions of the people, nor were they fitted to excite that universal and all-absorbing interest which was necessary to enable men to break through the fetters which had been for ages riveted upon them, and venture all for the truth. But after the Reformation had been begun on the only sure foundation, that of religious feeling, an enlightened criticism proved a most useful guide in saving men from error and fanaticism." — Vol. III. p. 410.

We have only, in conclusion, to express our gratitude to Mr.
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Cunningham for the important service he has rendered to the cause of theological learning among us by the present publication. Were we disposed to cavil, we should say, that he has retained the Latin form of names, both of persons and places, in several instances, in which the English form, being more familiar, and having the sanction of custom, would have been better. Thus he writes, *Ambrosius*, bishop of *Mediolanum*, for Ambrose, of Milan; *Hilarius*, bishop of Pictavium, for Hilary, of Poitiers; *Martin*, bishop of *Turonum*, for Martin, of Tours; Arles, he uniformly, so far as we have observed, writes, *Arelate*; thus he speaks of the Synods of *Arelate* and *Mediolanum*. We should have said, the Synods of Arles and Milan. We might give several other specimens. He is not always, however, consistent. Thus he sometimes writes *Basilus*, and sometimes, *Basil*, and once, at least, Ambrose of *Mediolanum*, and again, on the same page, we find the phrase, "Ambrose at Milan," relating to something there done by him. In these and other instances, we see no reason for retaining, in English composition, the old Latin form of the name, which would not also justify us in writing *Virgilius*, *Horatius*, *Livius*, *Sallustius*, *Roma*, *Italia*, instead of *Virgil*, *Horace*, *Livy*, *Sallust*, *Rome*, and *Italy*. But these are minute blemishes, which we should be less disposed to notice, were the execution of the work, in general, less perfect. But where we see so much to commend, and so little to censure, trivial defects arrest the attention. We hope that Mr. Cunningham will persevere and give to the public more of the fruits of his German studies.

The three volumes now before us bring down the history to the time of the Reformation. A fourth volume, not yet published, is to contain the history of Protestantism, from its origin to the present day. We hope that Mr. Cunningham will lose no time in giving it to the public, as soon as received. We trust that his labors will be duly appreciated. Such labors ought to be encouraged, though the tendency of things, both in this country, and in England, is, to hold out very slender motives to studies, which have no visible and direct bearing on outward and temporal prosperity, and the means of promoting mere physical comfort and enjoyment.

A. L.

ART. IV. — *A Harmony or Synoptical Arrangement of the Gospels; founded upon the most ancient Opinion respecting the Duration of our Saviour's Ministry, and exhibiting the Succession of Events in close Accordance with the Order of the two Apostolical Evangelists. With Dissertations, Notes, and Tables.* By LANT CARPENTER, LL. D., Minister of the Gospel. Bristol: William Browne. 1835. 8vo. pp. cxlvii., 296., (xxvi.)

IN adjusting the chronological harmony of the gospel history, the first step is to select some one of the four canonical gospels, as a basis for the harmony; for the fact that numerous discrepancies occur in the order of events as related by the different evangelists, can hardly have eluded the observation of any cursory reader, much less that of any critical student. The most obvious principle of selection is that indicated in the title of the work now before us, a work purporting to be "in close accordance with the order of the two apostolical evangelists." Of course these, who were companions of the Saviour's journeyings and eyewitnesses of his doings, were more likely to give an accurately arranged report of them, than those, who must have depended for their knowledge on second-hand narratives, however authentic. But when we investigate the nature and design of John's Gospel, we find ourselves compelled to set it aside as an insufficient basis for a harmony. Even if what he has recorded be given in its just chronological order, his omissions are so frequent and extensive as to make his narrative an entirely disjointed and broken one. Nor does his design appear to have been such as to demand even the slightest reference to the order of time. His Gospel was a "tale of the affections," — a selection from those scenes and conversations during the Saviour's life, which had appealed with the most power to his own loving and faithful breast, and by which he expected to enlist the most effectually the sympathy of his readers in his Master's cause, — a selection governed by no other principle, except one of these two virtually identical principles; the omission for the most part of what had been related by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and the adoption of Judea Proper, instead of Galilee, as the chief scene of his narrative. Thus John's Gospel, so far from furnishing data for a Christian chronology, needs a chronology elsewhere

derived either to correct or to verify the arrangement of its disconnected portions.

We turn, then, to the three first evangelists for the basis we seek. And here, in abatement of Matthew's claims as an eyewitness, we are met at the outset by the express purpose which Luke indicates in his introduction,—to write “in order,” (*καθ' ἑξῆς*.) But though this rendering of the original word be admissible, it is by no means necessary. The word is used by no other writer of the New Testament except St. Luke, and is used by him in the five instances in which it occurs in at least three, perhaps four, different senses. In Luke viii. 1, used substantively with *ἐν τῷ*, it is rightly rendered *afterwards*; in Acts iii. 22, it is employed to denote a succession in order of time; in Acts xi. 4, it may refer to the order of time, but more probably implies *systematically, methodically*,—while in Acts xviii. 23, it is an adverb of place. In St. Luke's proem, then, we are not restricted to the signification which our translators have given to the word, and there is one strong argument against it in the fact that Luke, though sometimes exceedingly precise in his note of time, yet often writes as if he were ignorant when events took place, and most manifestly groups together parables, which we can hardly suppose to have been uttered to the same audience. We would not object to Campbell's rendering,—“to write a *particular* account,” or to Doddridge's,—“to write an *orderly* account.” But we would prefer rendering the passage as follows. “It seemed good to me, having [first] traced out all things diligently from the beginning, *afterwards* to write to thee,” &c.

The other principal argument employed by those who would adopt the Gospel of St. Luke as the basis of a harmony, rests on the fact, that Luke generally coincides with Mark, where he differs from Matthew, in the arrangement of events, so as to present in his favor an array of two witnesses against one. This circumstance, at least, shows that Mark's and Luke's arrangement could not have been fortuitous or arbitrary; but that they must have relied on some common oral or written authority. And to this authority we might feel bound to yield our assent, were it not that in one portion of the narrative, in which it is impossible that Matthew should have been mistaken, and in which he could have had no conceivable motive for misplacing events, Mark and Luke differ widely from his order. We refer to the transactions recorded in Matt. ix. in immediate

connexion with the call of that evangelist. According to him, it was from the festival at his own house, on the day of his summons to become a disciple, that Jesus was sent for to the house of Jairus, on his way to which he cured the timid invalid who had suffered twelve years from a hopeless malady. The cure of Jairus's daughter and of the diseased woman, are placed, by Mark and Luke, immediately after the restoration of the Gadarene demoniacs. But with regard to the transactions of that most momentous day of Matthew's life, his spiritual birth-day, we must admit Matthew to be a trustworthy witness. In one case, at least, then, we find Mark and Luke agreeing in a false chronology. We must therefore resort to some other theory than their chronological accuracy, to account for their agreement when they depart from Matthew's order; and the claims of the latter, as an eyewitness, remain unimpaired.

There is yet another consideration suggested by a comparison of Matthew's and Luke's Gospels, already hinted at, but which we will here give more at length in the words of the book before us, — a consideration, which seems to us entirely subversive of Luke's claim to chronological accuracy.

“ With fewer details respecting the facts which he has recorded than we often find in St. Luke's Gospel, St. Matthew commonly gives more definite indications of time and place. Throughout the whole of his Gospel, excepting in his record of the first days in Jerusalem at the last passover, that of the period following the mission of the Apostles, there is no difficulty in tracing the course of events on a map and by a calendar, without the aid of the other gospels. On the other hand, — though St. Luke sometimes supplies a more distinct specification of time than the other gospels give, and shows, by chronological particularity, where it was attainable by him, (as in chap. iii. 1, 2, vi. 1, ix. 28, 37, 51,) that he made it an object of inquiry, — yet the attentive reader may find several indications of his not possessing all the information as to time and place which we can derive from the other gospels: for instance, he does not advert to the special commencement of our Lord's public preaching in Galilee, as taking place immediately after the imprisonment of the Baptist; and though, from St. Matthew we know that the cure of the paralytic took place at Capernaum, on our Lord's return from the country of the Gadarenes, and just before he called Matthew himself to attend his ministry, yet Luke, though he mentions *circumstances* which Matthew does not, speaks of it (ch. v. 17) as being *on one of the days*, and gives no clue to the place where it was wrought.” — p. lix.

So far we see ample cause for adopting Matthew's order. But the first three gospels present so many curious and at first sight perplexing phenomena, both of coincidence and of discrepancy, that we cannot but deem it the first business of the evangelical harmonist to select, defend, and establish some theory of their origin, which shall comprehend and elucidate all these phenomena. And herein lies the main deficiency of the work under review. We infer from here and there a random hint that our author adopts Eichhorn's *documentary* theory, as developed and illustrated by Bishop Marsh. But if this be the case, he has left his readers in the dark with regard alike to its grounds and its features. As the subject is one of equal interest and importance, we trust that we shall be pardoned, if, in order to the cursory discussion of it, we defer, for a few pages, the ostensible purpose of this article.

We have already referred to the discrepancy in the order of events between Matthew, Mark, and Luke. A similar discrepancy may be observed in the unessential minutiae of the narrative; and in these also, Mark and Luke generally coincide, when they differ from Matthew. Thus (to draw our illustration from the contents of a chapter to which we have made previous reference, Matt. ix.), Matthew omits, Mark and Luke both mention the circumstance, of the paralytic's being let down through the roof;—Mark and Luke both designate Matthew under the name of Levi, the son of Alphaeus;—according to Matthew, the ruler of the synagogue (whom he does not name) represents his daughter as already dead, while Mark and Luke (who both call him Jairus) represent her as yet living when her father applied to Jesus.

But notwithstanding these discrepancies, there is a far greater verbal coincidence between these three writers, not only in the record of discourses, but of events, than we commonly find in the works of independent historians. In Mark's Gospel there are but twenty-four verses, which may not be found, *almost* word for word in Matthew's or Luke's; and in very numerous instances there is an *entire* verbal coincidence between Mark and Luke, or Matthew. There is yet another singular circumstance. Luke is satisfactorily proved to have been a heathen, or at least, a Hellenist by birth,—he is uniformly said by early Christian writers to have been a man of liberal education; his Acts of the Apostles is far more pure, elegant, and classical, as a specimen of Greek composition, than any

other book in the New Testament; and the brief proem of his Gospel is marked by an almost Attic chasteness in the choice and arrangement of words. But yet his Gospel is no less full of Hebraisms, of unclassical combinations and foreign idioms, than is Matthew's; and there are several rare and peculiar words and idioms that are common to both of them. Thus they both use *περιγύιον*, an Alexandrinism, *ἐπιούσιος*, a word found nowhere else, and which, Origen says, was coined by the evangelists, — *γαζοφυλάκιον* in a sense, in which classical authors do not employ it, — *ἐπιφώσκω* in a peculiar sense, referred by Michaelis to a Syriac idiom, &c.

To account for these phenomena three classes of theories have been framed.

1. Many earlier and more recent authors have supposed that our three evangelists, though writing independently of each other, made use of a common document or documents. The first author to whom the idea seems to have occurred, was Le Clerc. It was adopted in different forms by various subsequent writers, but found very little currency or favor in the theological world, until it made its appearance in Eichhorn's complex and artificial theory, best known, perhaps, to many of our readers as given with but slight modifications by Marsh in his Michaelis. According to Eichhorn, these three Gospels were chiefly translated and compiled from preëxistent documents in the Aramaic dialect. He supposes, one principal document, which contained in the simplest form the events and discourses found in all three, one common to Matthew and Mark, one to Mark and Luke, concurrent, but distinct narratives by different hands of the events that are 'common and peculiar to Matthew and Luke, a separate Gnomology, to which Luke alone had access, besides various minor written and oral sources. The first thought that suggests itself on the examination of this ingenious theory is, that it creates as many difficulties as it removes,—that the queries which it raises without satisfying, are as numerous as the phenomena for which it accounts. Thus we are constrained at once to inquire whether, if such documents ever existed, it is credible that no trace of their having existed should be now discernible,—that the early fathers, on most points so minute, should have passed them over in silence,—that Origen and Eusebius, who not only give us a list of the sacred writings, but speak also of the sources whence Mark and Luke derived their information, should have made

no mention of these fountain-heads of evangelical tradition. Especially may we urge this inquiry with regard to the principal of the supposed documents, the one common to the three historians, which must have been a document of immense importance and value, of which it is inconceivable that the above-named writers should have seen or known any thing without mentioning it, yet which could hardly have had existence without their having been aware of the fact. This common document must have been far more valuable than the gospels compiled from it; and would not the same zeal, which prompted their frequent transcription and careful preservation, have rescued this also from destruction, or at least its memory from oblivion? Is it said that the evangelists, after compiling their own gospels, to give them greater currency and authority, destroyed their materials? This is accusing the sacred historians of a vanity and worldly ambition, utterly at variance with their well-known characters as self-denying and devoted Christian ministers and martyrs.

We would again ask, who could have been the author or authors of the document or documents thus used? Who could have been qualified to furnish Matthew, one of Christ's immediate disciples and constant followers, with his materials? Was it one of the four earliest apostles? We have a gospel by John; and, if Simon, Andrew, or James had undertaken a similar work, we see no reason why it should not have been transmitted to posterity in its original form, under the author's name.

We would also submit to the advocates of Eichhorn's theory, how far it is reconcilable with the following clause of St. Luke's proem: "Even as they *delivered** them unto us, which from the beginning were *eyewitnesses and ministers of the word*, it seemed good to me, also, *having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first*, to write," &c.

2. Another class of hypotheses rests on the idea that the first three evangelists copied from each other. The number of actual theories of this class hardly falls short of that which is arithmetically possible; nor can it interest our readers to know by what names illustrious in critical science each has been maintained. It is easy, however, to show that this whole class of theories is untenable.

* *Παρίδοται*, a word usually employed to indicate *oral tradition*.

For, first, it is inconceivable that either of the other two should have copied from Matthew; else they would surely have adopted his order of events as on the authority of an eyewitness. Especially would Luke have done this, as he professes to write, not what he knew by his own observation, but what he had heard from eyewitnesses. There are also several discrepancies between Matthew and the others, which set aside the supposition that his Gospel could have been used in the composition of theirs. Thus Matthew mentions two Gadarene demoniacs; Mark and Luke but one; — Matthew speaks of two blind men; Mark and Luke of but one, cured by Jesus in the environs of Jericho. Moreover, had Luke known of the existence of Matthew's Gospel, he would not have thought it necessary to write one of his own. He evidently regards the narratives of Christ's life, with which he was already acquainted, as void of authority and unworthy of trust, and most manifestly implies in his proem that their extreme faultiness was the chief motive which impelled him to the preparation of his Gospel, as the only means whereby Theophilus "might know the certainty of those things of which he had heard the rumor."* Yet again, Luke in his Gospel, and especially in the Acts of the Apostles, shows himself particularly careful to designate time and place with accuracy. The latter work is written with the utmost chronographical and topographical precision. And in the former, wherever he makes mention of time and place, it is with singular definiteness and formality, as a writer who deems these things of interest and moment. Now, had he possessed Matthew's Gospel, he would most assuredly have eagerly availed himself of Matthew's indications of time and place, and thus have given the *when* and the *where* of several incidents, which he represents as having occurred *on a certain day*, or *in a certain city*.

That Matthew and Luke could not have compiled their Gospels from Mark's, is evident from the far greater reach and compass of information which their Gospels manifest, and also from the entire ignorance of the existence of an *authoritative* history of Jesus, which Luke's proem implies.

It is impossible that Luke's Gospel should have been used by the others for purposes of compilation; for there are many

* Thus I am inclined to render *κατηχήσεις*.

events and parables of the most intensely interesting character which Luke alone gives us, which it is absolutely inconceivable that any compiler from him should have omitted. Indeed, no one can compare the three without feeling convinced that Luke enjoyed sources of information, to which Matthew and Mark had neither direct nor indirect access.

3. We come now to the more plausible supposition that the evangelists wrote from memory, (i. e. from their own or that of others,) and independently of each other. That they wrote from memory is rendered probable by the habits of the age in which they lived. The art of writing was not commonly employed then, as now, in taking contemporaneous notes of speeches and events. But the memory received a proportionally greater cultivation than at present; so that in profane authors we read of many feats of memory, resting on undoubted authority, but which it almost shakes our faith in history to peruse. Especially unfrequent must the habit of writing have been in the class of society to which the apostles and first disciples belonged; and perhaps an absolute ignorance of the art may have been the reason why so many of the twelve have left us no records or epistles. Nor, supposing them to have been ready and apt writers, is it in the least probable that, while with Christ, on their numerous journeys, voyages, and flights, they had writing materials constantly at hand, and that, the moment their Master began to converse, they assumed the attitude of students in a lecture-room. The circumstances under which Christ's discourses were uttered, were generally such, as would produce a deep impression upon the minds of the hearers, and tend to engrave the speaker's words on their memories. Discourses, delivered in the form of parables, would have been committed to memory with much greater ease than others; nor is it improbable that this was one of the reasons why Jesus so often employed a figurative form of speech. Then, as the discourses transmitted to us are very few, even for the short period of the Saviour's ministry, we may suppose that the more important were frequently repeated in substance at least.

But if, after all, we find it hard to believe the ordinary exercise of memory adequate to the composition of the Gospels, we have only to recur to the Saviour's promise: [The holy spirit] "shall teach you all things, and *bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said to you.*"

That the Gospels were written from memory, (i. e. from the memory of Matthew himself and of Mark's and Luke's informants,) would appear from the verbal variations in the discourses which are common to the three, — variations precisely such in kind and in degree, as we should suppose would exist in the accounts of three men, each of whom taxed his recollection to the utmost for an exact transcript of the speaker's language; but so unessential and trivial, that we can hardly suppose them intentional deviations from a common document.

Another reason for believing that the evangelists wrote independently alike of a common document and of each other's Gospels, is, that many of their several additions, omissions, and modifications are easily accounted for on that ground, and can be on that ground alone. They write discriminatingly, and carefully adapt their narratives to those for whom they were intended. Thus Luke, preparing his Gospel for a heathen reader, in speaking of Satan, uses a caution, (which Matthew, who wrote for the Jews, doubtless deemed superfluous,) in guarding against the doctrine of an *independent* evil principle: "All these things will I give thee, for *that is delivered unto me.*" Luke, writing for one not resident in Palestine, defines places and dates (when he does not appear entirely ignorant of them) with more accuracy than either Matthew or Mark. Matthew, writing for the benefit of his own countrymen, holds forth to their view Christ's denunciation of future calamity to the Jewish nation, and gives in full his harshest censures upon the Scribes and Pharisees, while Mark, writing (as venerable tradition informs us) for the church at Rome, where a disposition to insult and oppress the Jews was prevalent, very judiciously omits a large portion of this denunciation and rebuke. This certainly seems like the conduct of independent historians, who had at their own command and in their own minds the resources from which they were to draw, and who felt that they were not tampering with foreign materials.

But we have as yet assigned no adequate cause for the singular verbal coincidence between the first three Gospels. To account for this, let us advert, for a moment, to the circumstances of the infant church, immediately after the Saviour's ascension. The apostles and more intimate disciples remained together at Jerusalem for nearly three years. They met almost daily at each other's residences, for mutual exhortation and religious exercises. Matthew was of course there; Mark's

mother's house seems to have been one of their usual places of assembly ; and that Luke was also with them is rendered probable by the unanimous tradition which represents him to have been a very early convert, and by the graphic style, like that of an eyewitness, in which he depicts the doings of the day of Pentecost. The chief business of their meetings was undoubtedly discoursing to their own company, to the inhabitants of the city, and to the strangers who visited it at the great festivals, concerning all that Jesus said or did while on earth. They must have dwelt principally on what transpired in Galilee, as their hearers had enjoyed the means of knowing what had occurred at Jerusalem. In their long residence together, their modes of representing the history of Jesus would have naturally acquired an almost perfect uniformity, especially as the eleven doubtless strove, by a minute comparison of their several reminiscences, to fix every circumstance, however trivial, and to reproduce, word for word, the discourses as they were originally uttered. Thus in the course of these three years would have sprung up an *oral Gospel*, common to the eleven as its joint authors, having Galilee for its principal theatre, which would have been indelibly impressed, in almost identical terms, on the memories of all who uttered and heard it. Of this oral Gospel we may regard our first three Gospels, so far as their records go along together, as three separate transcripts from memory ; and their coincidences and discrepancies are just such in nature and degree as we should expect to find in three such transcripts. Matthew, we have remarked, deviates farther from Mark and Luke than they do from each other ; and we should naturally expect that he would deviate farther than they from the oral Gospel of the eleven, as, in committing it to writing, he would have constantly corrected it by reference to his own original and ineffaceable impressions. For the parts peculiar to him, we need refer only to his superior opportunities of knowledge as an apostle. Mark's narrative we may refer entirely to the oral Gospel of the eleven as its source.

Luke must have had sources of information peculiar to himself, sources to which even Matthew had not access. He must manifestly have had an intimate acquaintance with the family connexions of Jesus, from whom alone he could have received most of the incidents recorded in his first two chapters. We are much inclined to believe that he was the companion of Cleopas or Alpheus on the walk to Emmaus. This walk he

describes with so much distinctness and minuteness, that we can hardly suppose him to have been ignorant of the name of either party concerned in it; and he gives to the picture that peculiar freshness and vividness which always characterize a narrative of personal experience, so that we believe him to have withheld the name of Cleopas' companion from a modesty kindred to that, with which John calls himself "that *disciple*," and the like. Now Mary, the wife of Cleopas, was sister to Mary, our Lord's mother; and, if our conjecture be admitted as plausible, Luke's intimacy with Cleopas will account for his ample knowledge of the circumstances of our Saviour's birth and infancy. The mission of the Seventy is also peculiar to Luke; so are most of the parables that are recorded after the mention of that mission. We would here adopt the hypothesis of the author before us, that the mission of the seventy occurred, and that *most* of these parables were uttered during the absence of the Twelve on their missionary tour. We thus account for the silence of Matthew with regard to them; and may account for Luke's acquaintance with them by supposing (as many do, on the authority of lists found in the margin of several ancient manuscripts of the New Testament) that Luke himself was one of the Seventy, or that he drew material from personal converse with one of that body of disciples. Or, with Carpenter, we may locate the Saviour's residence in Peræa, slightly mentioned by John, (ch. x. 39-42,) and overlooked by Matthew and Mark, during the absence of the twelve, and suppose that most of the parables peculiar to Luke were uttered there, and were gathered by Luke by personal intercourse with inhabitants of Peræa, perhaps during his visit to Palestine with Paul, Acts xxi.

To account for the discrepancies in the order of events, we may suppose that Matthew wrote in the chronological order, which he alone had the means of knowing; and that Mark and Luke followed to a great degree the order, in which fortuitous circumstances might have associated portions of the narrative in their own minds. These associations would naturally have been common to them both, from their residence together at Jerusalem, so that we should expect to find them often coinciding in an order other than that of time.

Our readers will, we trust, be prepared, with Dr. Carpenter, to make Matthew's Gospel the basis of the evangelical harmony; and also to accord with him in the place which he

assigns to the principal events and discourses which are peculiar to Luke. Our next step (and one necessarily preliminary to the arrangement of the several portions of John's narrative in their proper niches) is, to determine the length of our Saviour's ministry. Our author adopts, and defends with great learning and ability, the hypothesis that this ministry included but two passovers. His reasons for this theory are,

1. "Admitting that our Lord's ministry included two passovers only, we have records of his attendance, for the all-important purposes of it, at each of the festivals which occurred during it." There are only five festivals at which we have distinct records of what Jesus said and did. The first is the Passover which occurred about two months after his baptism, and twelve days after his first miracle. The second is the feast at which he cured the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda, to which John gives no name, but which must have been the Pentecost, seven weeks after the Passover. The third is the feast of Tabernacles, which occurred in September; the fourth the feast of Dedication, near the close of November; the fifth, the crucifixion Passover. If other festivals occurred during Christ's ministry, we have no account of his presence and conduct at them. But at the Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles, it was the duty of every Jew to be present, and there was a grand national assembly. For both these reasons would Jesus have been present at them, in order to comply with the law of Moses, to which he always paid deference, as well as to seek opportunities of usefulness. But the hypothesis that the public ministry of Jesus included more than two Passovers, obliges us to believe that there were at least three of the great national festivals, which either Jesus did not attend, or at which he said and did nothing that the evangelists deemed sufficiently note-worthy for a place in their records.

2. "The bipaschal duration of our Lord's ministry could alone be derived from the records of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke." "Nothing can be derived from the first three Gospels, either separately or conjointly, which authorizes us to conclude, that, after the baptism of our Lord, there were more than one Passover before that at which he was crucified. Matthew, Mark, and Luke speak only of one Passover, namely, the last; nevertheless, since the walk through the cornfields must have occurred in the part of the year after a Passover," "it follows that there must have been two Passovers in the

ministry of Christ after his baptism." The bipaschal hypothesis enables us to fill, and yet no more than fill, all the time that it embraces, with the journeyings and events recorded by the Evangelists. Any other hypothesis leaves long intervals, of which we have no record; nor do the indications of time, which we derive from Matthew, Mark, and Luke jointly, permit us to expand their narrative beyond the space of fifteen months.

3. The bipaschal hypothesis is "strictly accordant with the Gospel of John." The only difficulty presented by the Gospel of John lies in the statement, with which he prefaces his account of the miraculous feeding of the five thousand, (ch. vi. 4.) "And the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." Those, who advocate the assignment of a more extended duration to our Saviour's ministry, regard this as an intermediate Passover between the first and the crucifixion Passover. But we must, in that case, suppose the occurrence of this Passover, of a Pentecost, and a feast of Tabernacles, and the passage of several long intervals of time, unnoticed by either of the evangelists. To support the bipaschal system, Mann and Priestley maintained that the words τὸ πάσχα were an interpolation; and Bishop Pearce, in his Commentary, regards the whole verse as spurious. But the verse is found, as in our received text, in all known manuscripts, and in all existing versions; and such an emendation of the text, on critical conjecture solely, is entirely inadmissible. We are therefore inclined to believe that these words are genuine, and that the Passover to which they refer was the crucifixion Passover. Were we to follow the indications of time given us in the first three Gospels, we should assign to the feeding of the five thousand a date of but a few weeks prior to the crucifixion; for the intervening events that they record would not occupy a longer space. But John inserts this miracle before the feast of Tabernacles; and if it actually occurred but a little before the last Passover, how are we to account for his lack of chronological accuracy? To this we would reply, that it was by no means John's object to give a connected and full account of his Master's ministry. "His leading object was, to record the ministry of Christ in Judea, particularly at the festivals; showing, in an especial degree, the means which had been afforded to the Jewish rulers and chief priests, of knowing the authority of Jesus." The miracle of the five thousand is then an insulated fragment, out of the general scope of John's Gospel, and was

doubtless introduced by him as prefatory to the discourse to which it gave rise, in the synagogue of Capernaum, which he alone has recorded, — a discourse “remarkable, both in itself, and in its effects upon the worldly-minded among his disciples.” Supposing (what we have reason to believe) that, so far as the transactions in Judea are concerned, John wrote in chronological order, he yet would have been likely to insert this insulated miracle and discourse in that place, where they would least disturb the continuity of his main history. Now, had he inserted them where, as we think, they chronologically belong, he must have placed the *sixth* chapter between the *eleventh* and *twelfth* chapters, and thus must have separated two narratives which he would naturally have desired to present in connexion, and which, in a history of transactions in Judea, belonged together, namely, the resurrection of Lazarus, and Christ's next meeting with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany, six days before his death. This consideration, to us at least, accounts satisfactorily and beautifully for the position which the miracle of the five thousand occupies in John's Gospel, and removes the only serious objection which that Gospel presents to the bipaschal hypothesis.

4. This hypothesis “was certainly the opinion of those who lived nearest to the time of Christ, which at least proves that there was no authentic tradition opposing it.” How the weight of this opinion of the early Christian writers is affected by the fact that some of them professed to rest it on a literal interpretation of the “acceptable *year* of the Lord,” mentioned by Isaiah, we have not time to inquire. But we consider the proof in favor of the bipaschal system as amply competent without, or (did the case so stand) against their testimony.

We have thus given a sketch of the reasoning in support of the hypothesis, which lies at the basis of Dr. Carpenter's *Harmony*, and have also, in the course of our remarks, proved or illustrated each of his other fundamental positions. Of these positions, which he deems essential to the coherent and satisfactory arrangement of the gospel history, he enumerates *five*. They are as follows.

“ I. Our Lord's ministry included two Passovers only.

“ II. The miracle of the Five thousand was wrought when that Passover was approaching, at which our Lord was crucified.

“ III. In framing a Chronological Arrangement of the Records of our Lord's ministry, a general preference is due to St. Matthew's order of events, where it differs from that of Mark and Luke.

"IV. The portion of St. Luke's Gospel which is contained in the tenth and following chapters, as far as the 11th verse of the seventeenth, is a Miscellaneous Collection of Discourses and other Occurrences, recorded, in general, without reference to the order of time; and we are at full liberty to arrange the separate Records of which the Gnomology is composed, in the position which best suits the chronological order, as established by the Gospels of the Apostles Matthew and John.

"V. Portions which are connected by contiguity in any Gospel, should not be needlessly separated from each other." — pp. cxv, cxvi.

We do not hesitate to pronounce this Harmony far superior in its claims, alike upon the critical student and the religious reader, to any similar work with which we are acquainted. Its chief merit consists in its having been conceived and executed in a sentiment of profound reverence for apostolic authority, and for the subject matter, the language, and the spirit of the evangelical narratives. It is accordingly free from that reckless, flippant style of criticism, from that readiness for conjectural emendation, from that taste for dismemberment and overturn, which has characterized not only the vulgar herd of biblical harmonists, but many scholars of great acumen and high attainments. Dr. Carpenter has, in no instance, for the sake of theory, altered the original text, or even refused assent in a doubtful case to the preponderance of critical authority. He has preserved, to an unprecedented degree, the integrity of each of the four Gospels; and with much fewer transpositions than his most wary predecessors have made, has woven the four into a natural, connected, comprehensive, and complete history. His work is literally a *harmony*; for, unlike most works of the kind, it presents the elements of the gospel narrative, not as *disjecta membra*, tumultuously arranged, and jostling each other in the places which they respectively occupy, but in a state of repose, aptly framed together, and fitting into each other like the timbers of a well-built edifice. The order of Matthew and of John is preserved almost without change; and the portions peculiar to Luke are inserted with very little alteration in his arrangement. This Harmony, as is well known, is the result of years of patient study and reflection; and it is a result amply worthy of the time and labor which it has cost.

The Harmony is preceded by four Dissertations. The *first*,
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"On the Duration of our Saviour's Ministry," considered as a critical disquisition, is preëminently characterized by clearness, thoroughness, and cogency of argument. To us its reasoning seems conclusive and unanswerable, though, before reading it, we were inclined to dissent from the author's hypothesis. The *second* dissertation, "On the Structure of the First Three Gospels in relation to the Succession of Events in our Lord's Ministry," maintains and establishes the general preferableness of Matthew's order. The *third* is an elaborate, graphic, thorough, and highly-instructive essay, "On the Political and Geographical State of Palestine at the period of our Lord's Ministry; giving a Descriptive Survey of the Districts in which he resided or journeyed." The *fourth*, "On the Succession of Events recorded in the Gospels; giving an Outline View of our Lord's Ministry," comprises a recapitulation of the points established in the preceding dissertations, and a synopsis of the Harmony. These dissertations will all be read with deep interest by the biblical scholar; and the third, if published by itself, would be welcomed and perused with avidity by readers of every class and age, nor are we acquainted with any brief compend of gospel geography so well adapted both to enlighten and to please. We would urge the expediency of its being issued separately, as a manual for Sabbath schools and bible classes.

In the Harmony, the birth and infancy of Jesus form an introductory chapter; and the records of his ministry are divided by as many prominent eras into ten parts; these are separated into smaller sections, and these again broken into paragraphs according to the sense, while the usual division of verses is indicated, for purposes of reference, by figures too minute to distract the reader's eye, or deform the page. The text of the Harmony is a chaste, careful, and valuable revision of the common text of James's translators, from whose time-hallowed phraseology we cannot find a single deviation not demanded by sound criticism. The very few critical notes, which accompany the text, are comprehensive, judicious, and pertinent.

The Harmony is followed by a Calendar of our Lord's ministry, a Tabular View of the contents of the Gospels, and a detailed Analysis of St. Luke's Gospel.

We would refer, before closing, to a very interesting feature of the volume before us. The work is in its aim, purport, and end, a purely critical one. Yet it is written in a style far

different from the cold, unfeeling, anatomizing style, which in these latter days the transatlantic muse of biblical criticism seems to have made her own. Dr. Carpenter's language is always that of reverence, devotion, and piety. Though he keeps singularly close to his province as a critic, though he in the whole volume does not, so far as we remember, indulge so much as a single moral or religious reflection, though there is no parade whatever of devotional words or thoughts, he seems never to forget, and he never lets his reader forget, that it is a *holy* record that he is analyzing, the history of the *Son of God* that he is illustrating.

We are told that the five hundred copies of the first edition of this *Harmony* were all demanded for subscribers, or for the author's personal friends. There must be a call for it in the theological public both of England and America. We hope to see it soon republished here; and cannot believe that party prejudice would prevent or delay the circulation, among the inquiring and studious of all denominations, of a work of so much learning and merit, on a subject of so deep interest and moment.

A. P. P.

ART. V. — *Poems*, by WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT. Fourth Edition. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1836.

THE poetry of Mr. Bryant has been before the public long enough to allow a dispassionate judgment to be formed of its merits, and the fact that four editions have been called for, shows what that judgment is. We think it highly creditable to the taste of the reading public, that such poetry should be relished. It has nothing to recommend it except its intrinsic excellence. It resorts to no tricks to obtain favor. It is not particularly exciting to the feelings. It does not appeal very strongly to the passions. It is neither licentious nor sentimental. It is not marked with any eccentricity. It is neither wildly romantic, nor brilliantly fanciful. It is not egotistical. It has none of these seasonings to recommend it to the public taste, and its popularity, in the absence of these, is more likely to indicate its genuine worth.

Mankind have, in every age, shown a great partiality for the poet. They have slept under the homilies of the preacher, and turned away from the dry formulas of the philosopher, but have sat with charmed ear while the poet has interpreted the book of life, hinted at the designs of Providence, appealed to the sense of right, and taught them the duties of their stations. In the early stages of society the poet is chronicler, monitor, and prophet. He celebrates the virtues of the dead. He stirs the soul to present action. And he carries forward the hopes of men into the unknown future. In a more cultivated period, when science has enlarged the bounds of exact knowledge, although the sphere of the poet's influence is contracted, he still wields a vast moral power, and continues to be followed with admiring eyes. But although poetical genius is a rare gift and highly to be prized, the possessor of it is perhaps less to be envied than is commonly supposed. Such is the wise impartiality of Providence, that splendid endowments of mind are attended with peculiar sources and avenues of pain. To whom much is given, upon him much also is imposed by way of discipline. That exquisite sensibility from which spring the highest efforts of art, subjects the poet to the acutest sufferings which "flesh is heir to." That work which the reader sits down in placid mood to peruse, and which he runs through with unabated delight, which warms his fancy and calls into exercise his best affections, which brings before him images of beauty and scenes of joy, — that work, when it was revolving in the strained and agitated mind of the author, was probably the occasion of more misery than satisfaction.

"At, Phœbi nondum patiens, immanis in antro
Bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit
Excussisse Deum : tanto magis ille fatigat
Os rabidum, fera corda domans, fingitque premendo."

Could the process be laid open to us which has been going on in the writer's mind from the time when the first idea germinated to the date of a full completion of his task ; could we know how much of despair and disgust have mingled with his exertions ; how imperfectly the pen has succeeded in drawing out and expressing the images that have passed before the mind ; what lassitude, exhaustion of spirits, dissatisfaction with common objects and pursuits have attended long-continued exercise of the faculties, we should, instead of coveting, rather commiserate the lot of him upon whom God has breathed the

inspiration of genius. It reconciles one to mediocrity to meditate upon the sufferings to which the gifted are exposed. Read the life of Cowper, and ponder its moral. At what a price did he purchase his undying fame! What conditions were, in his case, annexed to the gift of genius! All high intellectual qualities are accompanied with corresponding hazards. But this is eminently true of the poet. He exercises the most delicate part of human nature. If even one invisible string in the internal machinery gets awry, the harmony and peace of the soul are disturbed.

In conformity with the division of labor which has been introduced by the progress of society into all human employments, it is sometimes thought that the mind must confine itself to some single department of study or branch of art, in order to accomplish any thing worthy of being remembered. To a certain extent the doctrine may be admitted, and the practice may be good. But such specimens of humanity as the process, when carried to extremes, exhibits to us, are any thing but agreeable. The man who has spent the larger part of a life in studying the etymology of a word, or determining the genus to which a plant belongs, and he who in his humbler occupation toils year after year in making heads to pins, and who knows no more about their points than he does about astronomy or metaphysics, serve to remind us of that cruel custom which luxury has suggested, of turning the whole economy of animal life to the preternatural enlargement of a liver or other part, in order to furnish a more dainty dish for the sensualist.

But if the exclusive process we are considering be injurious in other departments of intellectual labor, we believe it to be almost sure to be fatal where the imagination is concerned. If the body cannot be supported and the health preserved by living exclusively upon stimulants, neither can the internal life and health by the use of the imagination alone. Hence, perhaps, has arisen much of the unhappiness, which has been proverbially the lot of poets.

It formed part of the intellectual discipline recommended by the practice of the ancients to unite the study of mathematics with the study of poetry. There was wisdom in this course. The abstract sciences, by their rigid method and their severe and tenacious logic, are well adapted to act as a balance to the expansiveness and elasticity of the imagination, and to induce that medium action of the mind, which is alone safe and

followed by durable beneficial results. The remarks we have ventured will show that we are not of the number of those who see with regret a man of brilliant imagination immersed in the active business of life. It might have saved Lord Byron many a bitter hour, had he been chained by necessity to the drudgery of office, and it might have corrected much of the poison which now glitters on his brilliant pages. And we think that the healthy tone which distinguishes Mr. Bryant's poetry, its freedom from a morbid melancholy and from false sentiment, would not have been likely to mark the productions of one who occupied no place in society, and who had no connexion with the realities of life.

But if the exercise of his art be attended with so many dangers to the poet himself, it is also highly important, on the reader's account, what kind of stimulus and how much is provided for his imagination. The poet exercises a more immediate and more powerful sway over the bent of the opening mind, and does more to determine character, than perhaps any other laborer in the field of literature. There is a period of life when poetry is seized upon to feed an importunate craving of the soul; when it is read, not for the sake of the quiet and innocent pleasures that accompany a cultivated and delicate taste, but to sharpen an insatiable appetite. And that period is a critical one. Alas for him who then drinks at a polluted fountain! And in this view the community owes much to Mr. Bryant. He has published nothing calculated to pervert the judgment, or to corrupt the heart. He has not dipped his pen in gall to write a bitter invective against his race. He has not thrown over the limbs of vice the beautiful drapery which should adorn virtue. He has caused no pain to the good by sneering at what the world calls holy and reverences as such. Nor is his merit in this respect merely negative. His poetry is moral and religious in a true sense. Without formal, technical allusions to the subject of religion, his works are yet imbued with a spirit of hearty devotion, which steals into the mind of the reader with a grateful sweetness. His pictures from Nature are adorned with light from above; and whether we walk with him "in the shadow of the aged wood," or follow the water-fowl through "the rosy depths" of heaven, we are led "from the creature to the Creator." He does not separate Nature from that Being of whom Nature is only the visible manifestation. It has been too often the case that poets have gone to one or the other of

the two extremes, either of utter indifference and sneering infidelity, or of a technical modish sanctity. It is therefore the more grateful when we meet with a writer who has thoughts and feelings of his own on the great subject, and who brings them forth on fit occasions, connects them with other thoughts by easy transitions and natural associations, and expresses them in the free, simple, unaffected language of the heart. What elevation of feeling pervades the Hymn of the City, which we cannot but rank among the very best of Bryant's productions.

"Not in the solitude
Alone, may man commune with Heaven, or see
Only in savage wood
And sunny vale, the present Deity ;
Or only hear his voice
Where the winds whisper and the waves rejoice.

"Even here do I behold
Thy steps, Almighty ! — here, amidst the crowd
Through the great city rolled,
With everlasting murmur, deep and loud, —
Choking the ways that wind
'Mongst the proud piles, the work of human kind.

* * * * *

"Thy spirit is around,
Quickening the restless mass that sweeps along ;
And this eternal sound, —
Voices and footfalls of the numberless throng, —
Like the resounding sea,
Or like the rainy tempest, speaks of thee.

"And when the hours of rest
Come, like a calm upon the mid-sea brine,
Hushing its billowy breast, —
The quiet of that moment, too, is thine ;
It breathes of him who keeps
The vast and helpless city while it sleeps."

The genius of Bryant is of a meditative cast, suited to moral, didactic poetry. With not enough of sublimity for the epic, or of character-painting for the drama, or of fire and passion for the higher lyric, he breathes a calm and quiet strain that harmonizes well with the gentle excitement awakened by contemplating the beauties of Nature. There are

several lyric pieces in the volume before us, easy, graceful, and some of them spirited. The "Song of Marion's Men" is full of spirit and action. But the peculiar genius of Bryant seems to us best evinced in such pieces as the "Lines to the Past," "Thanatopsis," "Rizpah," "The Rivulet," "Hymn to the North Star," and the "Lines to the Waterfowl," which have been so often quoted that they are familiar to the lovers of poetry. In such pieces he is at home, in his element; his nature guides his art, instead of being subject to it. And yet his moralizing never becomes tedious, nor does his sober spirit degenerate into melancholy. See in the following with what eyes he looks upon Nature.

"There are notes of joy from the hang-bird and wren,
And the gossip of swallows through all the sky;
The ground-squirrel gayly chirps by his den,
And the wilding bee hums merrily by.

"The clouds are at play in the azure space,
And their shadows at play on the bright green vale,
And here they stretch to the frolic chase,
And there they roll on the easy gale.

"There 's a dance of leaves in that aspen bower,
There 's a titter of winds in that beechen tree,
There 's a smile on the fruit, and a smile on the flower,
And a laugh from the brook that runs to the sea.

"And look at the broad-faced sun, how he smiles
On the dewy earth that smiles in his ray,
On the leaping waters and gay young isles,
Ay, look, and he 'll smile thy gloom away."

There are a few of our author's productions in which he attempts the sportive, and ironical, and humorous. We think they are entire failures. The "Lines addressed to the Musquito," "Spring in the City," and "A Meditation on Rhode-Island Coal," are of this class. That there are in them many of Bryant's excellences, — the same correct diction, and the same purity of style, that characterize his other writings, cannot be denied; but they fail in the very point that ought to distinguish them. He does not possess that power of rapidly combining ideas and images, that keen sense of the ridiculous, that brilliancy of fancy and gayety of temper, or that easy flow of language, which give such grace, and sprightliness, and point

to similar efforts by Halleck. All that need be said is, that such is not his turn; and if it were, he would probably be spoiled for those higher purposes to which he now ministers so admirably. There are few who can turn from grave to gay with a graceful and easy transition. Few are able to throw off the heavy armour of the serious muse, and in light steps move to the sprightly measure of gayer numbers, and woo successfully both *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*.

In point of style the poems of Bryant evince the greatest care, in touching and retouching, polishing and repolishing; and in these days, when books are written and published in such rapid succession, and often with so great carelessness, and when the hearing and reading public is inundated with a flood of words, it is refreshing to meet with such an exception, and one cannot but commend that wise delay which retains his works until they are as perfect as art can make them, and that nice taste which weighs his words and phrases in golden scales. What exquisite delicacy marks the following sonnet!

“Ay, thou art for the grave; thy glances shine
Too brightly to shine long; another Spring
Shall deck her for men's eyes, — but not for thine, —
Sealed in a sleep which knows no wakening.
The fields for thee have no medicinal leaf,
Nor the vexed ore a mineral of power;
And they who love thee wait in anxious grief,
Till the slow plague shall bring the fatal hour.
Glide softly to thy rest, then; Death should come
Gently, to one of gentle mould like thee,
As light winds wandering through groves of bloom
Detach the delicate blossom from the tree.
Close thy sweet eyes, calmly, and without pain;
And we will trust in God, to see thee, yet again.”

With respect to versification, we think our author succeeds better with rhyme than with blank verse. In a poet like Bryant, whose genius inclines to a quiet, moralizing mood, including very little of passion or enthusiasm, there seems to be the more need of the music of rhyme to redeem the verse from what might occasionally be set down as dullness. The volume before us exhibits a great variety of versification. In some of the lines we think there is not sufficient distinction from musical prose. The music of verse is to be judged of by the ear, and of course reading must be a good test. Now it

may be doubted, whether a person reading some of our author's pieces, especially those in the Spenserian verse, would easily convey to a listener a perfect idea of the structure of the verse. The lines run into each other. The thoughts are not always so compressed as is desirable. It requires two or more lines to express a thought or sentiment. The consequence is that the rhyme occasionally falls upon unimportant words; the sense pauses and the musical pauses interfere, and what is realized by the ear does not harmonize with what is realized by the mind of the reader. One of the conspicuous beauties of Dryden and Pope is the wonderful talent each possessed, of preserving his verse distinct, and at the same time expressing his thoughts with brevity, with ease, with point, with force. We do not contend that each line should form a separate sentence, but that each line ought to convey a distinct image; it may be only a branch of a sentence, but it may be complete as a branch, if such an expression may be allowed. Our impression of Wordsworth is, that in many of his pieces, he is diffuse, spreads his idea over several lines, and, in using more words, makes the image less distinct on the mind, and the music less perfect to the ear. The effect of this amplification in poetry is somewhat similar to the effect of the recitative in music.

One of the best specimens of musical verse in the volume before us is, we think, the little piece from the Spanish, called "The Siesta." It is a delicate love-ditty. We give a portion of it.

"Airs! that over the bending boughs,
And under the shadows of the leaves,
Murmur soft, like my timid vows
Or the secret sighs my bosom heaves, —
Gently sweeping the grassy ground,
Bearing delight where'er ye blow,
Make in the elms a lulling sound,
While my lady sleeps in the shade below."

The pieces entitled "Risbah," "The Song of Marion's Men," "The Gladness of Nature," "Green River," and that "To the Waterfowl," are fine instances of the adaptation of the verse to the thought. In the pieces entitled "The Death of the Flowers" and "The Song of the Stars," there seems to us an equal want of adaptation.

With respect to the translations from the Spanish we are not able to judge of their merit as translations; but there are two

of them we have read again and again with great delight. One of them is called "The Life of the Blessed," which is distinguished by a charming simplicity. The other is entitled "Mary Magdalen," and is a perfect gem.

"Blessed, yet sinful one and broken-hearted !
The crowd are pointing at the thing forlorn,
In wonder and in scorn !
Thou weepest days of innocence departed ;
Thou weepest, and thy tears have power to move
The Lord to pity and love.

"The greatest of thy follies is forgiven,
Even for the least of all the tears that shine
On that pale cheek of thine.
Thou didst kneel down to him who came from heaven,
Evil and ignorant, and thou shalt rise
Holy, and pure, and wise.

"It is not much that to the fragrant blossom
The ragged briar should change ; the bitter fir
Distil Arabian myrrh ;
Nor that, upon the wintry desert's bosom,
The harvest should rise plenteous, and the swain
Bear home the abundant grain.

"But come and see the bleak and barren mountains,
Thick to their tops with roses ; come and see
Leaves on the dry dead tree :
The perished plant, set out by living fountains,
Grows fruitful, and its beauteous branches rise,
For ever, towards the skies."

Mr. Bryant is one of those poets who come home to the universal mind and heart, consecrating our most familiar affections. He deals not in those obscure thoughts and images which present themselves to a small class only of thinkers, but pours the soft light of his genius over the common path on which the great multitude is moving. His poetry is simple and unaffected, beautiful without being overloaded with ornament, inspired by quiet communion with nature, not a transcript from the writings of others. He avoids altogether the literary epidemic of our times, when, out of a morbid fear of saying what has been said before, writers distort not only language but ideas, caricature sentiments, and present the most grotesque images to the fancy.

There is a cant in poetry as well as in criticism and religion. There are catchwords and set phrases, and a stereotyped language, which poetasters use, and with which they lure their readers into a high idea of their merit. The pages of Bryant are clear of such trash. We find in them no moping melancholy, no tinsel glitter, no empty conceits, no fulsome exaggerations. His poetry is of that sort which is of *use*. Let not the lovers of verse start at such praise. We are no Utilitarians in the ultra sense of the word. We would not degrade the noble art of poesy to the level of a piece of machinery, and calculate its value in the same way as we estimate the worth of a mechanical invention. Neither do we profess to be so transcendental as to put out of view the influence which poetry can and ought to exert upon the character, by operating through the most delicate part of that complex and mysterious nature God has given us. There is a poetry which maddens and sensualizes, and befools, which fills the imagination with all that is vulgar and vicious, which brings confusion into the thoughts, weakens the judgment, enervates the whole character, and unfits one for the duties and trials of life. We consider it the office of the true poet to elevate the mind sufficiently above common life to remind us of our destiny, and not so far but it may return from its soarings with a fresh relish for the realities of the present, and find itself braced up and invigorated for its work. That we hold to be the true poetry which sheds a rosy light upon the path of duty, which marries the imagination to the judgment, which performs a part, and aims so to do, in building up and adorning a true humanity, — a humanity in which shall be blended in graceful union the “beauty of holiness” and the severity of truth.

W. P. L.

ART. VI. — *The Sunday School. A Discourse pronounced before the Sunday School Society.* By WILLIAM E. CHANNING.

MATTHEW xix. 13, 14. Then were there brought unto him little children that he should put his hands on them and pray : and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

THE subject of this discourse is indicated by the name of the Society, at whose request I appear in this place. The Sunday

School, this is now to engage our attention. I believe, I can best aid it by expounding the principles on which it should rest and by which it should be guided. I am not anxious to pronounce an eulogy on this and similar institutions. They do much good, but they are destined to do greater. They are in their infancy, and are only giving promise of the benefits they are to confer. They already enjoy patronage, and this will increase certainly, necessarily, in proportion as they shall grow in efficiency and usefulness. I wish to say something of the great principles which should preside over them, and of the modes of operation by which they can best accomplish their end. This discourse, though especially designed for Sunday schools, is in truth equally applicable to domestic instruction. Parents who are anxious to train up their children in the paths of Christian virtue, will find in every principle and rule, now to be laid down, a guide for their own steps. How to reach, influence, enlighten, elevate the youthful mind, this is the grand topic; and who ought not to be interested in it? for who has not an interest in the young?

I propose to set before you my views under the following heads. I shall consider, first, the Principle on which such schools should be founded; next their End or great object; in the third place, What they should teach; and, lastly, How they should teach. These divisions, if there were time to fill them up, would exhaust the subject. I shall satisfy myself with offering you what seem to me the most important views under each.

I. I am, first, to consider the principle on which the Sunday school should be founded. It must be founded and carried on in Faith. You must not establish it from imitation, nor set it in motion because other sects have adopted a like machinery. The Sunday school must be founded on and sustained by a strong faith in its usefulness, its worth, its importance. Faith is the spring of all energetic action. Men throw their souls into objects, only because they believe them to be attainable and worth pursuit. You must have faith in your school; and for this end you must have faith in God; in the child whom you teach; and in the Scriptures which are to be taught.

You must have faith in God; and by this I do not mean a general belief of his existence and perfection, but a faith in him as the father and friend of the children whom you instruct, as desiring their progress more than all human friends, and as most ready to aid you in your efforts for their good. You must not

feel yourselves alone. You must not think when you enter the place of teaching, that only you and your pupils are present, and that you have nothing but your own power and wisdom to rely on for success. You must feel a high presence. You must feel that the Father of these children is near you, and that he loves them with a boundless love. Do not think of God as interested only in higher orders of beings, or only in great and distinguished men. The little child is as dear to him as the hero, as the philosopher, as the angel; for in that child are the germs of an angel's powers, and God has called him into being that he may become an angel. On this faith every Sunday school should be built, and on such a foundation it will stand firm and gather strength.

Again, you must have faith in the child whom you instruct. Believe in the greatness of its nature and in its capacity of improvement. Do not measure its mind by its frail, slender form. In a very few years, in ten years perhaps, that child is to come forward into life, to take on him the duties of an arduous vocation, to assume serious responsibilities, and soon after he may be the head of a family and have a voice in the government of his country. All the powers which he is to put forth in life, all the powers which are to be unfolded in his endless being, are now wrapt up within him. That mind, not you, nor I, nor an angel, can comprehend. Feel that your scholar, young as he is, is worthy of your intensest interest. Have faith in his nature, especially as fitted for religion. Do not, as some do, look on the child as born under the curse of God, as naturally hostile to all goodness and truth. What! the child totally depraved! Can it be that such a thought ever entered the mind of a human being? especially of a parent! What! in that beauty of childhood and youth, in that open brow, that cheerful smile, do you see the brand of total corruption? Is it a little fiend who sleeps so sweetly on his mother's breast? Was it an infant demon, which Jesus took in his arms and said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven?" Is the child, who, as you relate to him a story of suffering or generosity, listens with a tearful or kindling eye and a throbbing heart, is *he* a child of hell? As soon could I look on the sun, and think it the source of darkness, as on the countenance of childhood or of youth, and see total depravity written there. My friends, we should believe any doctrine sooner than this, for it tempts us to curse the day of our birth; to loathe our existence; and, by

making our Creator our worst foe and our fellow-creatures hateful, it tends to rupture all the ties which bind us to God and our race. My friends, have faith in the child ; not that it is virtuous and holy at birth ; for virtue or holiness is not, cannot be born with us, but is a free, voluntary effort of a being who knows the distinction of right and wrong, and who, if tempted, adheres to the right ; but have faith in the child as capable of knowing and loving the good and the true, as having a conscience to take the side of duty, as open to ingenuous motives for well-doing, as created for knowledge, wisdom, piety, and disinterested love.

Once more, you must have faith in Christianity as adapted to the mind of the child, as the very truth fitted to enlighten, interest, and improve the human being in the first years of life. It is the property of our religion, that whilst it stretches beyond the grasp of the mightiest intellect, it contracts itself, so to speak, within the limits of the narrowest ; that whilst it furnishes matter of inexhaustible speculation to such men as Locke and Newton, it condescends to the ignorant and becomes the teacher of babes. Christianity at once speaks with authority in the schools of the learned, and enters the nursery to instil with gentle voice celestial wisdom into the ears of infancy. And this wonderful property of our religion is to be explained by its being founded on, and answering to, the primitive and most universal principles of human nature. It reveals God as a parent, and the first sentiment which dawns on the child is love to its parents. It enjoins not arbitrary commands, but teaches the everlasting principles of duty ; and the sense of duty begins to unfold itself in the earliest stages of our being. It speaks of a future world and its inhabitants, and childhood welcomes the idea of angels, of spirits, of the vast, the wonderful, the unseen. Above all, Christianity is set forth in the life, the history, the character of Jesus ; and his character, though so sublime, is still so real, so genuine, so remarkable for simplicity, and so naturally unfolded amidst the common scenes of life, that it is seized in its principal features by the child as no other greatness can be. One of the excellences of Christianity is, that it is not an abstruse theory ; not wrapt up in abstract phrases, but taught us in facts, in narratives. It lives, moves, speaks, and acts before our eyes. Christian love is not taught us in cold precepts. It speaks from the cross. So immortality is not a vague promise. It breaks forth like the morning from

the tomb near Calvary. It becomes a glorious reality in the person of the rising Saviour; and his ascension opens to our view the heaven into which he enters. It is this historical form of our religion which peculiarly adapts it to childhood, to the imagination and heart, which open first in childhood. In this sense the kingdom of heaven, the religion of Christ, belongs to children. This you must feel. Believe in the fitness of our religion for those you teach. Feel that you have the very instrument for acting on the young mind, that you have the life-giving word.

II. Having considered the faith in which the Sunday school should be founded, I proceed now to consider the end, the great object, which should be proposed and kept steadily in view by its friends. To work efficiently and usefully, we must understand what we are to work for. In proportion as an end is seen dimly and unsteadily, our action will be vague, uncertain, and our energy wasted. What, then, is the end of the Sunday school? The great end is, to awaken the soul of the pupil, to bring his understanding, conscience, and heart into earnest, vigorous action on religious and moral truth, to excite and cherish in him Spiritual Life. Inward life, force, activity, this it must be our aim to call forth and build up in all our teachings of the young, especially in religious teaching. You must never forget, my friends, whether parents or Sunday-school instructors, what kind of a being you are acting upon. Never forget that the child is a rational, moral, free being, and that the great end of education is to awaken rational and moral energy within him, and to lead him to the free choice of the right, to the free determination of himself to truth and duty. The child is not a piece of wax to be moulded at another's pleasure, not a stone to be hewn passively into any shape which the caprice and interest of others may dictate; but a living, thinking being, made to act from principles in his own heart, to distinguish for himself between good and evil, between truth and falsehood, to form himself, to be in an important sense the author of his own character, the determiner of his own future being. This most important view of the child should never forsake the teacher. He is a free moral agent, and our end should be to develop such a being. He must not be treated as if he were unthinking matter. You can make a house, a ship, a statue, without its own consent. You determine the

machines, which you form, wholly by your own will. The child has a will as well as yourselves. The great design of his being is, that he should act *from* himself and *on* himself. He can understand the perfection of his nature, and is created that he may accomplish it from free choice, from a sense of duty, from his own deliberate purpose.

The great end in religious instruction, whether in the Sunday school or family, is, not to stamp *our* minds irresistibly on the young, but to stir up their own; not to make them see with our eyes, but to look inquiringly and steadily with their own; not to give them a definite amount of knowledge, but to inspire a fervent love of truth; not to form an outward regularity, but to touch inward springs; not to burden the memory, but to quicken and strengthen the power of thought; not to bind them by ineradicable prejudices to our particular sect or peculiar notions, but to prepare them for impartial, conscientious judging of whatever subjects may, in the course of Providence, be offered to their decision; not to impose religion upon them in the form of arbitrary rules, which rest on no foundation but our own word and will, but to awaken the conscience, the moral discernment, so that they may discern and approve for themselves what is everlastingly right and good; not to *tell* them that God is good, but to help them to see and feel his love in all that he does within and around them; not to tell them of the dignity of Christ, but to open their inward eye to the beauty and greatness of his character, and to enkindle aspirations after a kindred virtue. In a word, the great object of all schools is to awaken intellectual and moral life in the child. Life is the great thing to be sought in a human being. Hitherto most religions and governments have been very much contrivances for extinguishing life in the human soul. Thanks to God, we live to see the dawning of a better day.

By these remarks, I do not mean that we are never to give our children a command without assigning our reasons, or an opinion without stating our proofs. They must rely on us in the first instance for much that they cannot comprehend; but I mean, that our great aim in controlling them must be to train them to control themselves, and our great aim in giving them instruction, must be to aid them in the acquisition of truth for themselves. As far as possible, religion should be adapted to their minds and hearts. We should teach religion as we do nature. We do not shut up our children from outward nature,

and require them to believe in the great laws of the Creator, in the powers of light, heat, steam, gravity, on our word alone. We put them in the presence of nature. We delight to verify what we teach them of the mineral, animal, and vegetable worlds, by facts placed under their own eyes. We encourage them to observe for themselves, and to submit to experiment what they hear. Now, all the great principles of morals and religion may be illustrated and confirmed, like the great laws of nature, by what falls under the child's own consciousness and experience. Indeed great moral and religious truths are nearer to him than the principles of natural science. The germs of them are in his soul. All the elementary ideas of God and duty and love and happiness come to him from his own spiritual powers and affections. Moral good and evil, virtue and vice, are revealed to him in his own motives of action and in the motives of those around him. Faith in God and virtue does not depend on assertion alone. Religion carries its own evidence with it more than history or science. It should rest more on the soul's own consciousness, experience, and observation. To wake up the soul to a clear, affectionate perception of the reality and truth and greatness of religion is the great end of teaching.

The great danger of Sunday schools is, that they will fall into a course of mechanical teaching, that they will give religion as a lifeless tradition, and not as a quickening reality. It is not enough to use words conveying truth. Truth must be so given that the mind will lay hold on, will recognise it as truth, and will incorporate it with itself. The most important truth may lie like a dead weight on the mind, just as the most wholesome food, for want of action in the digestive organs, becomes an oppressive load. I do not think that so much harm is done by giving error to a child, as by giving truth in a lifeless form. What is the misery of the multitudes in Christian countries? Not that they disbelieve Christianity; not that they hold great errors, but that truth lies dead within them. They use the most sacred words without meaning. They hear of spiritual realities, awful enough to raise the dead, with utter unconcern; and one reason of this insensibility is, that teaching in early life was so mechanical, that religion was lodged in the memory and the unthinking belief, whilst the reason was not awakened, nor the conscience nor the heart moved. According to the common modes of instruction, the minds of the young

become worn to great truths. By reading the Scriptures without thought or feeling, their minds are dulled to its most touching and sublime passages; and, when once a passage lies dead in the mind, its resurrection to life and power is a most difficult work. Here lies the great danger of Sunday schools. Let us never forget, that their end is to awaken life in the minds and hearts of the young.

III. I now proceed to consider what is to be taught in the Sunday schools to accomplish the great end of which I have spoken;* and this may seem soon settled. Should I ask you what is to be taught in the Sunday school, the answer would be, "The Christian religion. The institution is a Christian one, and has for its end the communication of Christian truth." I acquiesce in the answer; but the question then comes, "In what forms shall the religion be taught, so as to wake up the life of the child? Shall a catechism be taught?" I say, No. A catechism is a skeleton, a dead letter, a petrification. Wanting life, it can give none. A cold abstraction, it cannot but make religion repulsive to pupils whose age demands that truth should be embodied, set before their eyes, bound up with real life. A catechism, by being systematical, may give a certain order and method to teaching; but systems of theology are out of place in Sunday schools. They belong to the end, not the beginning, of religious teaching. Besides, they are so generally the constructions of human ingenuity rather than the living forms of divine wisdom; they give such undue prominence to doctrines which have been lifted into importance only by the accident of having been made matters of controversy; they so often sacrifice common sense, the plain dictates of reason and conscience, to the preservation of what is called consistency; they lay such fetters on teacher and learner, and prevent so much the free action of the mind and heart, that they seldom enter the Sunday school but to darken and mislead it.

The Christian religion should be learned not from catechisms and systems, but from the Scriptures, and especially from that

* In the remarks which I am to make on what is to be taught in the Sunday school, I take it for granted that this school is the first stage of a course of religious instruction, not the whole course; that it prepares for, but does not include Bible classes and other classes, in which the most difficult books of Scripture, the evidences of natural and revealed religion, and a system of moral philosophy, should be taught.

part of the Scriptures in which it especially resides, in the histories, actions, words, sufferings, triumphs of Jesus Christ. The Gospels, the Gospels, these should be the text-book of Sunday schools. They are more adapted to the child than any other part of Scripture. They are full of life, reality, beauty, power, and in skilful hands are fitted above all writing to awaken spiritual life in old and young.

The Gospels are to be the study of the Sunday-school teacher, and of all who teach the young; and the great object of study must be, to penetrate to the spirit of these divine writings, and above all things to comprehend the spirit, character, purpose, motives, love of Jesus Christ. He is to be the great study. In him, his religion is revealed as nowhere else. Much attention is now given, and properly given, by teachers to what may be called the letter of the Gospels, to the geography of the country where Christ lived, to the customs to which he refers, to the state of society which surrounded him. This knowledge is of great utility. We should strive to learn the circumstances in which Jesus was placed and lived, as thoroughly as those of our own times. We should study the men among whom he lived, their opinions and passions, their hopes and expectations, the sects who hated and opposed him, the superstitions which prevailed among the learned and the multitude, and strive to see all these things as vividly as if we had lived at the very moment of Christ's ministry. But all this knowledge is to be gained not for its own sake, but as a means of bringing us near to Jesus, of letting us into the secrets of his mind, of revealing to us his spirit and character, and of bringing out the full purpose and import of all that he did and said. It is only by knowing the people among whom he was born, and brought up, and lived, and died, that we can fully comprehend the originality, strength, and dignity of his character, his unborrowed, self-subsisting excellence, his miraculous love. We have very few of us a conception, how Jesus stood alone in the age in which he lived, how unsustained he was in his great work, how he found not one mind to comprehend his own, not one friend to sympathize with his great purpose, how every outward influence withstood him; and, for want of this conception, we do not regard Jesus with the interest which his character should inspire.

The teachers of the young should strive to be at home with Jesus, to know him familiarly, to form a clear, vivid, bright idea

of him, to see him just as he appeared on earth, to see him in the very dress in which he manifested himself to the men of his age. He should follow him to the temple, to the mountain top, to the shores of the sea of Galilee, and should understand the mixed feelings of the crowd around him, should see the scowl of the Pharisee who listened to catch his words for some matter of accusation, the imploring look of the diseased seeking healing from his words, the gaze of wonder among the ignorant, and the delighted, affectionate, reverential eagerness with which the single-hearted and humble hung on his lips. Just in proportion as we can place ourselves near to Christ, his wisdom, love, greatness will break forth, and we shall be able to bring him near to the mind of the child.

The truth is, that few of us apprehend vividly the circumstances under which Jesus lived and taught, and therefore much of the propriety, beauty, and authority of his character is lost. For example, his outward condition is not made real to us. The pictures which the great artists have left us of Jesus have helped to lead us astray. He is there seen with a glory around his head, and arrayed in a robe of grace and majesty. Now Jesus was a poor man; he had lived and wrought as a carpenter, and he came in the dress common to those with whom he had grown up. His chosen companions were natives of an obscure province, despised for its ignorance and rude manners, and they followed him in the garb of men who were accustomed to live by daily toil. Such was the outward condition of Jesus. Such was his manifestation to a people burning with expectation of a splendid, conquering deliverer; and in such circumstances he spoke with an authority which awed both high and low. In learning the outward circumstances of Jesus, we not merely satisfy a natural curiosity, but obtain a help towards understanding his character and the spirit of his religion. His condition reveals to us the force and dignity of his mind, which could dispense with the ordinary means of inspiring respect. It shows the deep sympathy of Christ with the poor of our race, for among these he chose to live. It speaks condemnation to those who, professing to believe in Christ, separate themselves from the multitude of men because of the accident of wealth, and attach ideas of superiority to dress and show. From this illustration you may learn the importance of being acquainted with every part of Christ's history, with his common life, as well as his more solemn actions and teachings. Every thing

relating to him breathes instruction and gives the teacher a power over the mind of the child.

The Gospels must be the great study to the Sunday-school teacher. Many, when they hear of studying the New Testament, imagine that they must examine commentators to understand better the difficult texts, the dark passages in that book. I mean something very different. Strive indeed to clear up as far as you can the obscure portions of Christ's teaching. There are texts, which, in consequence of their connexion with forgotten circumstances of the time, are now of uncertain meaning. But do not think that the most important truths of Christianity are locked up in these dark passages of the New Testament. There is nothing in the dark, which is not to be found in the plain, portions of Scripture. Perhaps the highest use of examining difficult texts is to discover their harmony with those that are clear. The parts of the Gospel, which the Sunday-school teacher should most study, are those which need no great elucidation from criticism, the parables, the miracles, the actions, the suffering, the prayers, the tears of Jesus; and these are to be studied, that the teacher may learn the spirit, the soul of Christ, may come near to that wonderful being, may learn the great purpose to which he was devoted, the affections which overflowed his heart, the depth and expansiveness of his love, the profoundness of his wisdom, the unconquerable strength of his trust in God.* The character of Christ is the sum of his religion. It is the clearest, the most beautiful manifestation of the character of God, far more clear and touching

* Commentaries have their use, but not the highest use. They explain the letter of Christianity, give the meaning of words, remove obscurities from the sense, and so far they do great good; but the life, the power, the spirit of Christianity, they do not unfold. They do not lay open to us the heart of Christ. I remember that a short time ago I was reading a book, not intended to be a religious one, in which some remarks were offered on the conduct of Jesus, as, just before his death, he descended from the Mount of Olives, and amidst a crowd of shouting disciples looked on Jerusalem, the city of his murderers, which in a few hours was to be stained with his innocent blood. The conscious greatness with which he announced the ruin of that proud metropolis and its venerated temple, and his deep sympathy with its approaching woes, bursting forth in tears, and making him forget for a moment his own near agonies and the shouts of the surrounding multitude, were brought to my mind more distinctly than ever before; and I felt that this more vivid apprehension of Jesus was worth more than much of the learning in which commentators abound.

than all the teachings of nature. It is also the brightest revelation to us of the Moral Perfection which his precepts enjoin, of disinterested love to God and man, of faithfulness to principle, of fearlessness in duty, of superiority to the world, of delight in the Good and the True. The expositions of the Christian virtues in all the volumes of all ages are cold and dark, compared with the genial light and the warm coloring in which Christ's character sets before us the spirit of his religion, the perfection of our nature.

The great work then of the Sunday-school teacher is to teach Christ, and to teach him not as set forth in creeds and human systems, but as living and moving in the simple histories of the Evangelists. Christ is to be taught; and by this I mean not any mystical doctrine about his nature, not the doctrine of the Trinity, but the spirit of Christ, breathing forth in all that he said and all that he did. We should seek, that the child should know his heavenly friend and Saviour with the distinctness with which he knows an earthly friend; and this knowledge is not to be given by teaching him dark notions about Christ, which have perplexed and convulsed the church for ages. The doctrine of the Trinity seems to me only fitted to throw a mistiness over Christ, to place him beyond the reach of our understanding and hearts. When I am told that Jesus Christ is the second person in the Trinity, one of three persons, who constitute one God, one infinite mind, I am plunged into an abyss of darkness. Jesus becomes to me the most unintelligible being in the universe. God I can know. Man I can understand. But Christ, as described in human creeds, a compound being, at once man and God, at once infinite in wisdom and ignorant of innumerable truths, and who is so united with two other persons as to make with them one mind, Christ so represented baffles all my faculties. I cannot lay hold on him. My weak intellect is wholly at fault; and I cannot believe that the child's intellect can better apprehend him. This is a grave objection to the doctrine of the Trinity. It destroys the reality, the distinctness, the touching nearness of Jesus Christ. It gives him an air of fiction, and has done more than all things to prevent a true, deep acquaintance with him, with his spirit, with the workings of his mind, with the sublimity of his virtue. It has thrown a glare over him, under which the bright and beautiful features of his character have been very much concealed.

From what I have said, you see what I suppose the Sunday-school teacher is to learn and teach. It is the Christian religion as unfolded in the plainest portions of the Gospel. Before leaving this topic, I wish to offer some remarks, which may prevent all misapprehension of what I have said. I have spoken against teaching Christianity to children as a system. I have spoken of the inadequacy of catechisms. In thus speaking, I do not mean that the teacher shall have nothing systematic in his knowledge. Far from it. He must not satisfy himself with studying separate actions, words, and miracles of Jesus. He must look at Christ's history and teaching as a whole, and observe the great features of his truth and goodness, the grand characteristics of his system, and in this way learn what great impressions he must strive to make on the child by the particular facts and precepts which each lesson presents. There ought to be a unity in the mind of the teacher. His instructions must not be loose fragments, but be bound together by great views. Perhaps you may ask, what are these great views of Christianity, which pervade it throughout, and to which the mind of the learner must be continually turned. There are three, which seem to me especially prominent, the Spirituality of the religion, its Disinterestedness, and, lastly, the vastness, the Infinity of its Prospects.

The first great feature of Christianity which should be brought out continually to the child, is its Spirituality. Christ is a spiritual deliverer. His salvation is inward. This great truth cannot be too much insisted on. Christ's salvation is within. The evils from which he comes to release us are inward. The felicity which he came to give is inward, and therefore everlasting. Carry, then, your pupils into themselves. Awake in them, as far as possible, a consciousness of their spiritual nature, of the infinite riches which are locked up in reason, in conscience, in the power of knowing God, loving goodness, and practising duty; and use all the history and teachings of Christ, to set him before them as the fountain of life and light to their souls. For example, when his reign, kingdom, power, authority, throne, are spoken of, guard them against attaching an outward import to these words; teach them that they mean not an outward empire, but the purifying, elevating influence of his character, truth, spirit, on the human mind. Use all his miracles as types, emblems, of a spiritual salvation. When your pupils read of his giving

sight to the blind, let them see in this a manifestation of his character as the Light of the world ; and, in the joy of the individual whose eyes were opened from perpetual night on the beauty of nature, let them see a figure of the happiness of the true disciple, who, by following Christ, is brought to the vision of a more glorious luminary than the sun, and of a more majestic and enduring universe than material worlds. When the precepts of Christ are the subjects of conversation, turn the mind of the child to their spiritual import. Let him see, that the worth of the action lies in the principle, motive, purpose, from which it springs ; that love to God, not outward worship, and love to man, not outward deeds, are the very essence, soul, centre, of the Christian law. Turn his attention to the singular force and boldness of language, in which Jesus calls us to rise above the body and the world, above the pleasures and pains of the senses, above wealth and show, above every outward good. In speaking of the promises and threatenings of Christianity, do not speak as if goodness were to be sought and sin shunned for their outward consequences ; but express your deep conviction, that goodness is its own reward, worth infinitely more than all outward recompense, and that sin is its own curse, and more to be dreaded on its own account, than a burning hell. When God is the subject of conversation, do not spend all your strength in talking of what he has made around you ; do not point the young to his outward works as his chief manifestations. Lead them to think of him as revealed in their own minds, as the Father of their spirits, as more intimately present with their souls than with the sun, and teach them to account as his best gifts not outward possessions, but the silent influences of his spirit, his communications of light to their minds, of warmth and elevation to their feelings, and of force to their resolution of well-doing. Let the spirituality of Christianity shine forth in all your teachings. Let the young see how superior Jesus was to outward things, how he looked down on wealth and show as below his notice, how he cared nothing for outward distinctions, how the beggar by the road-side received from him marks of deeper interest than Pilate on his judgment-seat or Herod on his throne, how he looked only at the human spirit and sought nothing but its recovery and life.

I have spoken of the Spirituality of Christianity. The next great feature of the religion to be constantly set before the child is its Disinterestedness. The essence of Christianity

is generous affection. Nothing so distinguishes it as generosity. Disinterested love not only breaks out in separate teachings of Christ ; it spreads like the broad light of heaven over the whole religion. Every precept is but an aspect, an expression, of generous love. This prompted every word, guided every step, of Jesus. It was the life of his ministry ; it warmed his heart in death ; it flowed out with his heart's blood. The pupil should be constantly led to see and feel this divine spirit pervading the religion. The Gospels should be used to inspire him with reverence for generous self-sacrifice and with aversion to every thing narrow and mean. Let him learn that he is not to live for himself ; that he has a heart to be given to God and to his fellow-creatures ; that he is to do the will of God, not in a mercenary spirit, but from gratitude, filial love, and from sincere delight in goodness ; that he is to prepare himself to toil and suffer for his race. The cross, that emblem of self-sacrifice, that highest form of an all-surrendering love, is to be set before him as the standard of his religion, the banner under which he is to live, and, if God so require, to die.

There is one other great feature of Christianity, and that is the vastness, the Infinity of its Prospects. This was revealed in the whole life of Jesus. In all that he said, we see his mind possessed with the thought of being ordained to confer an infinite good. That teacher knows little of Christ, who does not see him filled with the consciousness of being the author of an everlasting salvation and happiness to the human race. "I am the resurrection and the life. He that believeth on me shall never see death." Such was his language, and such never fell before from human lips. When I endeavour to bring to my mind the vast hopes, which inspired him as he pronounced these words, and his joy at the anticipation of the immortal fruits which his life and death were to yield to our race, I feel how little his character is yet understood by those, who think of Jesus as a man of sorrow, borne down habitually by a load of grief. Constantly lead your pupils to observe, how real, deep, and vivid was the impression on the mind of Jesus of that future, everlasting life, which he came to bestow. Speak to them of the happiness, with which he looked on all human virtue, as being a germ which was to unfold for ever, a fountain of living water which was to spring up into immortality, a love which was to expand through all ages and to embrace the universe. It is through the mind of Christ, living,

as it did, in a higher world, that they can best comprehend the reality and vastness of the prospects of the human soul.

Such are the three great features of the religion which the teacher should bring most frequently to the mind of the child. In these, as in all my preceding remarks, you perceive the importance which I attach to the character of Christ as the great means of giving spiritual light and life to the mind. The Gospels, in which he is placed before us so vividly, are in truth the chief repositories of divine wisdom. The greatest productions of human genius have little quickening power in comparison with these simple narratives. In reading the Gospels, I feel myself in presence of one who speaks as man never spake; whose voice is not of the earth; who speaks with a tone of reality and authority altogether his own; who speaks of God as conscious of his immediate presence, as enjoying with him the intimacy of an only Son; and who speaks of heaven, as most familiar with higher states of being. Great truths come from Jesus with a simplicity, an ease, showing how deeply they pervaded and possessed his mind. No books astonish me like the Gospels. Jesus, the hero of the story, is a more extraordinary being than imagination has feigned, and yet his character has an impress of nature, consistency, truth, never surpassed. You have all seen portraits, which, as soon as seen, you felt to be likenesses, so living were they, so natural, so true. Such is the impression made on my mind by the the Gospels. I believe, that you or I could lift mountains, or create a world, as easily as fanaticism or imposture could have created such a character and history as that of Jesus Christ. I have read the Gospels for years, and seldom read them now without gaining some new or more striking view of the great teacher and deliverer whom they portray. Of all books they deserve most the study of youth and age. Happy the Sunday school in which their spirit is revealed!

But I have not yet said every thing in favor of them as the great sources of instruction. I have said, that the Christian religion is to be taught from the Gospels. This is their great, but not their only use. Much incidental instruction is to be drawn from them. There are two great subjects, on which it is very desirable to give to the young the light they can receive, human nature and human life; and on these points the Gospels furnish occasions of much useful teaching. They give us not only the life and character of Christ, but place him before us in the midst of human beings and of human affairs.

Peter, the ardent, the confident, the false, the penitent Peter ; the affectionate John ; the treacherous Judas, selling his Master for gold ; Mary, the mother, at the cross ; Mary Magdalen at the tomb ; the woman, who had been a sinner, bathing his feet with tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head ;—what revelations of the human soul are these ! What depths of our nature do they lay open ! It is a remarkable fact, that the great masters of painting have drawn their chief subjects from the New Testament ; so full is this volume of the most powerful and touching exhibitions of human character. And how much instruction does this book convey in regard to life as well as in regard to the soul ! I do not know a more affecting picture of human experience than the simple narrative of Luke ; “ When Jesus came nigh to the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow ; and much people of the city was with her.” The Gospels show us fellow-beings in all varieties of condition, the blind man, the leper, the rich young ruler, the furious multitude. They give practical views of life, which cannot be too early impressed. They show us, in the history of Jesus and his apostles, that true greatness may be found in the humblest ranks, and that goodness, in proportion as it becomes eminent, exposes itself to hatred and reproach, so that we must make up our minds, if we would be faithful, to encounter shame and loss, for God and duty. In truth, all the variety of wisdom which youth needs may be extracted from these writings. The Gospels, then, are to be the great study of the Sunday school.

I cannot close these remarks on what is to be taught in the Sunday school, without repeating what I have said of the chief danger of this institution. I refer to the danger of mechanical teaching, by which the young mind becomes worn, deadened to the greatest truths. The Gospels, life-giving as they are, may be rendered wholly inoperative by the want of life in the instructor. So great is my dread of tame, mechanical teaching, that I am sometimes almost tempted to question the utility of Sunday schools. We, Protestants, in our zeal for the Bible, are apt to forget that the very commonness of the book tends to impair its power, that familiarity breeds indifference, and that no book, therefore, requires such a living power in the teacher. He must beware, lest he make the Gospels trite by too frequent repetition. It will often be best for him to assist his pupils in extracting the great principle or truth involved in a

precept, parable, or action of Jesus, and to make this the subject of conversation, without further reference to the text by which it was suggested. If he can lead them by fit questions, to find this principle in their own consciousness and experience, in their own moral judgments and feelings, and to discover how it should be applied to their characters and brought out in their common lives, he will not only convey the most important instruction, but will give new vividness and interest to the Scriptures and a deeper conviction of their truth, by showing, how congenial they are with human nature and how intimately connected with human affairs and with real life. Let me also mention, as another means of preserving the Scriptures from degradation by too frequent handling, that extracts from biography, history, natural science, fitted to make religious impressions, should be occasionally introduced into the Sunday school. Such seems to me the instruction, which the ends of this institution require.

IV. We have now seen what is to be taught in the Sunday school, and the question now comes, How shall it be taught? This is my last head, and not the least important. On the manner of teaching how much depends! I fear it is not sufficiently studied by Sunday-school instructors. They meet generally, and ought regularly to meet, to prepare themselves for their tasks. But their object commonly is to learn *what* they are to teach, rather than *how* to teach it; but the last requires equal attention with the first, I had almost said more. From deficiency in this, we sometimes see that an instructor, profoundly acquainted with his subject, is less successful in teaching than another of comparatively superficial acquisitions; he knows much, but does not know the way to the child's mind and heart. The same truth, which attracts and impresses from one man's lips, repels from another. At the meeting of the Sunday-school teachers, it is not enough to learn the meaning of the portion of Scripture which is to be the subject of the next lesson; it is more important to select from it the particular topics which are adapted to the pupil's comprehension, and still more necessary to inquire, under what lights or aspects they may be brought to his view, so as to arrest attention and reach the heart. A principal end in the meeting of teachers should be to learn the art of teaching, the way of approach to the youthful mind.

The first aim of the teacher will of course be, to fix the attention of the pupil. It is in vain, that you have his body

in the school-room, if his mind is wandering beyond it, or refuses to fasten itself on the topic of discourse. In common schools attention is fixed by a severe discipline, incompatible with the spirit of Sunday schools. Of course the teacher must aim to secure it by a moral influence over the youthful mind.

As the first means of establishing an influence over the young, I would say, you must love them. Nothing attracts like love. Children are said to be shrewd physiognomists, and read as by instinct our feelings in our countenances; they know and are drawn to their friends. I recently asked, how a singularly successful teacher in religion obtained his remarkable ascendancy over the young. The reply was, that his whole intercourse expressed affection. His secret was a sincere love.

The next remark is, that, to awaken in the young an interest in what you teach, you must take an interest in it yourselves. You must not only understand, but feel, the truth. Your manner must have the natural animation, which always accompanies a work into which our hearts enter. Accordingly, one of the chief qualifications of a Sunday-school teacher is religious sensibility. Old and young are drawn by a natural earnestness of manner. Almost any subject may be made interesting, if the teacher will but throw into it his soul.

Another important rule is, Let your teaching be intelligible. Children will not listen to words which excite no ideas, or only vague and misty conceptions. Speak to them in the familiar, simple language of common life, and, if the lesson have difficult terms, define them. Children love light, not darkness. Choose topics of conversation to which their minds are equal, and pass from one to another by steps which the young can follow. Be clear, and you will do much towards being interesting teachers.

Another suggestion is, Teach much by questions. These stimulate, stir up, the young mind, and make it its own teacher. They encourage the spirit of inquiry, the habit of thought. Questions, skilfully proposed, turn the child to his own consciousness and experience, and will often draw out from his own soul the truth which you wish to impart; and no lesson is so well learned, as that which a man or child teaches himself.

Again, teach graphically where you can. That is, when you are discoursing of any narrative of Scripture or relating an incident from other sources, try to seize its great points and to place it before the eyes of your pupils. Cultivate the power of description. A story well told, and in which the most

important particulars are brought out in a strong light, not only fixes attention, but often carries a truth farthest into the soul.

Another rule is, Lay the chief stress on what is most important in religion. Do not conduct the child over the Gospels as over a dead level. Seize on the great points, the great ideas. Do not confound the essential and the unessential, or insist with the same earnestness on grand, comprehensive, life-giving truths and on disputable articles of faith. Immense injury is done by teaching doubtful or secondary doctrines as if they were the weightiest matters of Christianity; for, as time rolls over the child, and his mind unfolds, he discovers that one and another dogma, which he was taught to regard as fundamental, is uncertain if not false, and his skepticism is apt to spread from this weak point over the whole Christian system. Make it your aim to fix in your pupils the grand principles in which the essence of Christianity consists, and which all time and experience serve to confirm; and, in doing this, you will open the mind to all truth as fast as it is presented in the course of Providence.

Another rule is, Carry a cheerful spirit into religious teaching. Do not merely speak of Christianity as the only fountain of happiness. Let your tones and words bear witness to its benignant, cheering influence. Youth is the age of joy and hope, and nothing repels it more than gloom. Do not array religion in terror. Do not make God a painful thought by speaking of him as present only to see and punish sin. Speak of his fatherly interest in the young with a warm heart and a beaming eye, and encourage their filial approach and prayers. On this part, however, you must beware of sacrificing truth to the desire of winning your pupil. Truth, truth in her severest as well as mildest forms, must be placed before the young. Do not, to attract them to duty, represent it as a smooth and flowery path. Do not tell them that they can become good, excellent, generous, holy, without effort and pain. Teach them that the sacrifice of self-will, of private interest and pleasure, to other's rights and happiness, to the dictates of conscience, to the will of God, is the very essence of piety and goodness. But at the same time teach them, that there is a pure, calm joy, an inward peace, in surrendering every thing to duty, which can be found in no selfish success. Help them to sympathize with the toils, pains, sacrifices of the philanthropist, the martyr, the patriot, and inspire contempt of fear and peril in adhering to truth and God.

I will add one more rule. Speak of duty, of religion, as something real, just as you speak of the interests of this life. Do not speak, as if you were repeating words received from tradition, but as if you were talking of things, which you have seen and known. Nothing attracts old and young more than a tone of reality, the natural tone of strong conviction. Speak to them of God as a real being, of heaven as a real state, of duty as a real obligation. Let them see, that you regard Christianity as intended to bear on real and common life, that you expect every principle which you teach to be acted out, to be made a rule in the concerns of every day. Show the application of Christianity to the familiar scenes and pursuits of life. Bring it out to them as the Great Reality. So teach, and you will not teach in vain.

I have thus set before you the principles, on which Sunday schools should rest, and by which they should be guided. If they shall, in any degree, conform to these principles, and I trust they will, you cannot, my friends, cherish them with too much care. Their purpose cannot be spoken of too strongly. Their end is, the moral and religious education of the young, and this is the most pressing concern of our times. In all times, indeed, it has strong claims; but it was never, perhaps, so important as now, and never could its neglect induce such fearful consequences. The present is a season of great peril to the rising generation. It is distinguished by a remarkable developement of human power, activity, and freedom. The progress of science has given men a new control of nature, and in this way has opened new sources of wealth and multiplied the means of indulgence, and in an equal degree multiplied temptations to worldliness, cupidity, and crime. Our times are still more distinguished by the spirit of liberty and innovation. Old institutions and usages, the old restraints on the young, have been broken down. Men of all conditions and ages think, speak, write, act, with a freedom unknown before. Our times have their advantages. But we must not hide from ourselves our true position. This increase of power and freedom, of which I have spoken, tends, in the first instance, to unsettle moral principles, to give to men's minds a restlessness, a want of stability, a wildness of opinion, an extravagance of desire, a bold, rash, reckless spirit. These are times of great moral danger. Outward restraints are removed to an

unprecedented degree, and consequently there is a need of inward restraint, of the controlling power of a pure religion, beyond what was ever known before. The principles of the young are exposed to fearful assaults, and they need to be fortified with peculiar care. Temptations throng on the rising generation with new violence, and the power to withstand them must be proportionably increased. Society never needed such zealous efforts, such unslumbering watchfulness for its safety, as at this moment ; and without faithfulness on the part of parents and good men, its bright prospects may be turned into gloom.

Sunday schools belong to this period of society. They grow naturally from the extension of knowledge, in consequence of which more are qualified to teach than in former times, and they are suited to prepare the young for the severe trials which await them in life. As such, let them be cherished. The great question for parents to ask is, how they may strengthen their children against temptation, how they can implant in them principles of duty, purposes of virtue, which will withstand all storms, and which will grow up into all that is generous, just, beautiful, and holy in feeling and action. The question, how your children may prosper most in life, should be secondary. Give them force of character, and you give them more than a fortune. Give them pure and lofty principles, and you give them more than thrones. Instil into them Christian benevolence and the love of God, and you enrich them more than by laying worlds at their feet. Sunday schools are meant to aid you in the great work of forming your children to true excellence. I say they are meant to aid you, not to relieve you from the work, not to be your substitutes, not to diminish domestic watchfulness and teaching, but to concur with you, to give you fellow-laborers, to strengthen your influence over your children. Then give these schools your hearty support, without which they cannot prosper. Your children should be your first care. You indeed sustain interesting relations to society, but your great relation is to your children ; and in truth you cannot discharge your obligations to society by any service so effectual, as by training up for it enlightened and worthy members in the bosom of the family and the church.

Like all schools, the Sunday school must owe its influence to its teachers. I would, therefore, close this discourse with

saying, that the most gifted in our congregation cannot find a worthier field of labor than the Sunday school. The noblest work on earth is to act with an elevating power on a human spirit. The greatest men of past times have not been politicians or warriors, who have influenced the outward policy or grandeur of kingdoms; but men, who, by their deep wisdom and generous sentiments, have given light and life to the minds and hearts of their own age and left a legacy of truth and virtue to posterity. Whoever, in the humblest sphere, imparts God's truth to one human spirit, partakes their glory. He labors on an immortal nature. He is laying the foundation of imperishable excellence and happiness. His work, if he succeed, will outlive empires and the stars.

ART. VII. — *The Young Lady's Friend.* By A LADY.
Boston: American Stationers' Company. 1836. 12mo.
pp. 436.

EDUCATION, properly understood, is the preparation of the human being for the duties and cares of life; and wherever its meaning is limited to a part of that preparation without embracing the whole, the character formed by its influences will have something wanting. The interests of the mind are not the only ones to be regarded, the physical nature and the moral nature have equal claims to attention; and in our original constitution they are so intimately associated together that whoever gives all his care to one at the expense of the rest, will find it impossible to succeed with that one. Sooner or later our nature avenges its own wrongs. If the mind be cultivated while the body is neglected, such misplaced attention leads not to intellectual power and excellence, but to a wretched life and perhaps an early grave. And there are examples not a few, in which the moral nature or the religious affections have been forced into premature developement to such an excess, that, if God did not in his mercy remove the victim, he lived barren and useless; a burden to himself, and no blessing to mankind.

From our own observation, we are inclined to fear that what

is often called female education, at the present day, regards a part of our nature rather than the whole. We do not refer to instructors, who in general are employed for specified purposes, and, when these are accomplished, naturally consider their duty as done. We refer rather to the ambition of parents, who are apt to take pride in the attainments, rather than in the character, of their children. If they have the name, and in general it is nothing but the name, of knowing a sufficient variety of languages and sciences, the parents are delighted with their improvement, and feel as if there was nothing more to desire. In order to remove all obstacles from so brilliant a progress, the mother will submit to be a contented and patient drudge for her children, relieving them from all domestic cares, even from the care of themselves. And when their education, so called, is finished, and the joyous mother welcomes them home as so many lights and blessings to the household, she finds, to her surprise and indignation, that since she has performed their domestic duties so long, they prefer that she should perform them still; they do not know, and do not choose to learn them. When she expects them to follow her own good example of watching with the sick, visiting the poor, and doing those various offices of kindness which social life imposes, she finds that they are disgusted with the vulgar reality of suffering, and have patience with nothing but interesting and elegant distress. No wonder she is disappointed; but she should remember that these are cares and duties which the young do not learn of themselves; they need to be taught them; but she has placed them without the sphere of her own influence and example, and so far has done her part to unfit them for usefulness and social duty. Moreover she is disappointed in the prime object of her ambition; for the character must grow in fair proportions, or not at all: and while the moral powers are unexerted, the intellectual vigor can increase only to a certain point, beyond which it will not go.

It must be observed here, that we lament this prevailing ambition, because we think it implies a limited view, or rather no view at all, of the objects of education. Of excessive and premature developements of the mind at the expense of the moral and physical nature, we have no sort of apprehension. For, as we have remarked, this danger seems to be provided for in the order of nature, which requires that the powers shall be carried forward in harmony or not at all. We do, indeed,

see examples of such intellectual developement, where the body fails as fast as the mind gains strength; but in such cases as we have had an opportunity to observe, this developement was not the cause but the effect of disease: it was apparently the unhealthy action of the brain which produced these preternatural exertions. An artificial system of forcing might injure the body, no doubt, but there are very few instances in which it would produce the expected results upon the mind. It is not excessive care of the mind, but rather entire neglect of the physical system, which brings so many lamented victims to an untimely grave. Of course we speak generally; there are some exceptions: but, for the most part, the ill-judged ambition to make children intellectual without regard to the other purposes of existence, simply injures the body without enlarging the mind. The mind sympathizes with the frame, and grows weaker every day, till the whole nature becomes a ruin.

In fact, the great proportion of intellectual developement which rejoices a parent's heart, is not such as to inspire many fears, except, perhaps, that the mind may perish by disuse and decay. The memory is a faculty which may be cultivated at a very early age, and in the common routine of school instruction it will give a child the appearance of brilliant promise; but as the time approaches when the reasoning powers should be unfolded, they are not found to be quick and active in proportion, and the remarkable childhood dwindles to the common standard, sometimes far beneath it, though more frequently under-estimated in consequence of the disappointment of early hopes. The taste for reading which we sometimes witness in early childhood, a devotion to books, which is regarded as indicating the finest intellectual promise, is apt to be of the same description. The parent hails this taste with delight, and encourages it to the utmost of his power; but after a time he finds that it was only a substitute for intellectual activity, and the mind was entirely passive when it was thought to be so actively employed. The reading which has been provided in such abundance for children, intended to sweeten moral and intellectual instruction which would not otherwise go down, has had a most injurious effect. The expectation is that, as the mind expands, it will seek more substantial food for itself; but this expectation is disappointed. The cry is still for fiction, nothing but fiction: and the swarms of pestilent novels, written by authors who seem to have been created without the moral

sense, and brought by ship-loads to this country for want of a sale at home, complete the work which the Sunday-school library had begun. Many parents can bear sorrowful testimony, that the promise from which they took so much encouragement, was of this description; their children made use of books not as materials, but as substitutes, for thought, and their minds were in danger of perishing by inaction rather than over exertion.

We should be very far from discouraging the ambition to make children intellectual; but we protest against sacrificing the moral and spiritual nature. It will be to no purpose; the object will seldom be gained, while other things, of more importance to the character, will be neglected and lost. That part of our nature which has to do with God and spiritual subjects, should receive the first attention, and it should be impressed on the parent's heart, that if conscience and the moral and religious sentiment are not developed, no other improvement would be worth possessing, supposing it were possible to make it. To leave this spiritual culture, therefore, to time and chance, as many parents do, is a ruinous mistake of the interests of the human being, and it is one which may never be repaired. There are many who were thus neglected in childhood, and have become painfully sensible of this neglect on the part of those who were meant to be parents of the souls of their children. They feel now, that their parents were in a melancholy error, when they attempted to force the intellectual growth, and left the soul uncared for. They now attempt to repair the consequences of that error; but they find it so difficult that they almost despair. Their minds fall off from the subject of religion as fast as they attempt to grasp it: they are not at home in serious contemplation: they find that it would be much easier to turn the hands to new labors, or the mind to new studies, than to wake up the spiritual nature to consider those subjects which concern its welfare; subjects which it was not taught to regard in those years when impressions are deepest, and which it now, in consequence of that early neglect, regards from necessity, not from choice; in a spirit of fear, rather than of love.

The writer of this valuable work supposes that the conscience of her young readers is awakened, and that they are desirous to know and do their duties; her object is to aid them to estimate and discharge the common duties of life. Because

they are common it does not follow that they shall be familiar, still less that they shall be discharged; for very often the imagination of the young dwells on uncommon duties, such as they will seldom or never be called on to practise, and while they are taken up with such flattering visions, they neglect the obligations that are always before them. Some have mothers who can give them such instruction on this subject as they need; but such parents, far from feeling that a work like this is not needed, will value it as a clear and discriminating view of youthful duty. It will not be thought unnecessary, except by those who do not feel the importance of character and usefulness in their children, and of course are indifferent to the details of which character and usefulness are made up. But there are many children, even among those who have parents living, who are not blessed with such instruction; and to them this book will be welcome as a friend who affords them the suggestions and counsels which they need, and are not likely to find elsewhere.

This work is written with great directness and simplicity; the style is easy and graceful, and the arrangement of the subjects is good; moreover it is written with a proper spirit of independence, paying small regard to that fastidiousness which tolerates only easy generalities of virtue, and shrinks from the common details of domestic and personal duty. The writer deserves well of her sex for the design and execution of her work; nor is ours less interested, for the comfort of every family essentially depends on those for whose benefit this work is intended. If they do not know or do not care for the obligations which she reminds them of, the fireside, the sick-chamber, and all places where they should be ministering angels, become places of desolation. Such duties must be early learned, or they will never be gracefully and easily done. It is not the willing spirit only which is wanted; the hands need practice to obey the suggestions of the feeling: and there are few objects more melancholy, than that of the amiable and untried, when they are called to render services and attentions to those whom they love. They find that the inexperienced hands are of small service, even when the heart is right; and they are obliged to leave to the stranger and the hireling to perform those acts of kindness which they would rejoice to do.

In the opening chapter of her work, the writer comments with great good sense upon the aimlessness of what is often

called education. It is supposed to begin and end in the school. When the girl leaves the school, to become an efficient member of the family, her education is, in common phrase, said to be *finished*; whereas she finds, to her sorrow and shame, that it has not yet begun: she finds herself an utter stranger to those means and powers which make useful and happy members of the domestic circle; and even the improvement of her mind, the only object which her previous instruction aimed to secure, is all at a stand, because she has never learned to use it, having been accustomed to receive impressions, not to make exertions. Knowing that many, who are really desirous to be useful, find themselves unable from this want of the necessary discipline and instruction, the writer offers suggestions to aid them in supplying the defect. She treats not of morals and religion, but of the manner in which conscience shall be applied to the duties and concerns of every day, on which, after all, the great amount of human happiness depends, and which are apt to be neglected, because they are common and familiar, the very circumstance which gives them their great importance.

“How it would startle many an amiable and well-educated girl to be thus addressed by an experienced friend; ‘You are in the daily habit of doing things, which shock my taste, infringe upon my rights, cause me continual personal inconvenience, remind me unnecessarily of the infirmities of your body, make you appear selfish where you least intend to be so, coarse where you would fain be refined, noisy where you might be gentle, an incumbrance where you might be an acquisition.’ Yet this might be said with truth to half the misses in their teens, who little know how much they are indebted to the patience and good humor of their elders, for tolerating them in their awkwardness and ignorance; but, if their faults were once pointed out to them, they would see them in their true light, and avoid them for ever afterwards.

“Those who are most annoyed by the faulty manners of the young, cannot always point out to them the little details in which they are defective; they condemn their conduct in general terms, without attempting to analyze it, or to help them to correct it. To supply this deficiency in the friends of the young, and to stand in the place of friends to those who have none, is the purpose for which the following pages are written. By entering into the most minute details of every-day life, I would hold up to view those little particulars of conduct, which, though trifling in themselves, go to make up an agreeable or disagreeable whole; I would show the

numerous ways, in which thoughtlessness of the rights of others leads to their violation." — pp. 11, 12.

In the second chapter are some very good remarks upon the want of time, that prevailing complaint among the young, who, like other spendthrifts, suffer from want by reason of their very abundance. The writer shows that if the hours are used with any regard to system, time enough and to spare will be found for all the purposes of existence. But the great practical maxim which saves from every kind of want is, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost!" It is incredible how much may be accomplished in those orts and ends of time which hang heavy on most hands for want of something to do. She tells us that she herself read through the *Spectator* and the *Rambler* while waiting for a dilatory member of the family, and netted many yards of lace while he was despatching his breakfast. Loss of time is not the only thing prevented, by this habit of improving the minutes; loss of temper, the process by which we take vengeance on ourselves for the misdeeds of others, is also guarded against by this habitual industry. Were it only as an antidote for ill-humor, certainly the worst ill that flesh is heir to, the recipe deserves to be recommended to all, old as well as young; the neglected duty might have been performed twice over in some of those moments which are passed in fretting and lamenting that it has not been done.

There is one thing connected with this subject which the writer has suggested, and might have dwelt upon at greater length; we mean the habit of mind which allows the young to indulge in reverie, mistaking it for thought, and regarding this kind of enjoyment, which is little better than a pleasure of sense, as a high intellectual gratification. The young consider their minds as active on these occasions; they might as well give the name of bodily exercise to drumming with the fingers. To let the mind play upon a subject is one thing, and to bring the mind to act upon a subject is another. This musing is a kind of intellectual dissipation; and while it appears like one of the most harmless ways in which time can be wasted, it is doing irreparable injury to the mental powers, which, after being accustomed to this luxurious indulgence, can never again be induced to engage in any severe exertion.

In respect to domestic management, a subject in which all are interested, the writer gives much valuable instruction.

The miserable little story books, brought over in such abundance from the mother country, strongly inculcate kindness to servants and other inferiors; "a fine trait," as Dr. Johnson said of a lady who was praised for it, "though it might not be so easy to tell who the lady's inferiors were." If any young lady in this country were to form her manners upon such judicious suggestion, she would soon find that she had given mortal offence by her condescension, and that domestics would leave her to finish her journey alone. The prevailing prosperity of our country is changing our domestic and social system; no one here is compelled, by power or circumstances, to serve another. This state of things may occasion inconvenience at times, to those who are accustomed to be served; but we do not hear it complained of by the serving party, whose interests are certainly entitled to regard. If the whole extent of the evil is, that it compels mothers to press their daughters into the service of the family, it cannot be regarded as very tragical: since it affords them a knowledge of those cares and duties, without which they will be helpless and useless beings; and it is better to bear the yoke in youth, than to bend the neck to it, for the first time, in later years. But whether it is welcome or not, the change will go on; the only way to prepare for it, is to depend as little as possible upon the services of others, and as much as possible upon our own. We like the free spirit with which the writer has discussed the subject of domestic economy. Many of the daughters of wealth will look with huge contempt on such details, but unexpected changes are common in this country; the rich to-day may be poor to-morrow; and the qualifications which enable the poor to bear want with dignity, are the same which the rich need to teach them the use of wealth, which is lent, not given, and which must be strictly answered for at last.

The subject of health is discussed with judgment and freedom; and it is certainly one of the most important that can be presented to the females of our country. The premature decay, so often charged upon the climate, is owing, not to the climate, but to a neglect of all those habits and observances on which health depends. One who would be induced to follow the rules laid down in this work, which are by no means excessive, would, in ordinary circumstances, live in health and happiness for a score of years beyond the period when decline is apt to begin. Consumption is the great destroyer in our

country ; but a great proportion of those who sink under it, are little better than suicides, who will not regard the rules necessary to secure their health, and are therefore called to pay this solemn penalty for their violation.

In the chapter on the subject of behaviour to parents and their friends, the author touches upon a subject of great importance.

“ Whence comes it, then, that there is so little demonstration of respect, in the manners of the rising generation, toward the authors of their being ? What can the state of *feeling* be, when the language to a parent is such, as would be scarcely tolerable when addressed to a young companion ? Is it compatible with filial reverence, flatly to contradict a father, to laugh at a mother's ways, to reply to a grave question jocosely, without giving the information required, to interrupt parents in the midst of speaking, to oppose their opinions in a tone of self-confidence, implying that your judgment is quite as good as theirs, or to leave the room whilst they are still addressing you ? Yet all these things are continually done by girls, who, if questioned on the state of their feelings towards their father or mother, would say, they loved and respected them, and would not do any thing to give them pain.” — pp. 202, 203.

The evil here alluded to, is one which no one can help observing. Considered merely in relation to manners, it is improper and ungraceful : but it implies a more serious defect : for reverence is inseparable from virtue. Those who know how to estimate high attributes of character, always respect them in others : and where this respect is wanting, we may be certain that there is an indifference to every thing really excellent and exalted. We give the author's remarks on this subject ; they are written with great discrimination, and what is of less importance, with great beauty of style.

“ The sentiment of reverence is one of the noblest attributes of the human mind ; to its exercise, God has affixed an exquisite sense of enjoyment ; it operates in a thousand ways to elevate and embellish the character. Its first developement is in the feelings of a child for its parents, and this is the natural preparation of the mind for its rise to a higher object, even to the Father in heaven. As the understanding ripens, and this sentiment is cultivated, it embraces all that is great and good among men, all that is vast and magnificent in nature and in art ; shedding over the character of its possessor an indescribable grace, softening the very tones of the voice, and rendering it impossible for the manners to be wanting

in deference and courtesy towards parents, or teachers, or the aged of any description.

"Where the sentiment of reverence is deficient, a foundation is wanting for many graceful superstructures; and the defect shows itself in various ways, of which the irreverent are little aware, or they would endeavour to supply the deficiency, as a mere matter of taste, if not of principle. Such persons will have unpleasant manners which no rules of good breeding will correct; and as the irreverent state of feeling grows by indulgence in disrespectful demeanor, they are in danger of becoming bold, reckless, and even impious.

"You whom I address are yet young; whatever may have been your education, you are yet young enough to reëducate yourselves; you have hearts capable of being touched by the beautiful, the true, the sublime; you feel reverence for God and the things that belong to religion; but you have not perhaps considered how the same sentiment is connected with other relations in life. In all the great moral authors whom you have read, you have found filial piety, and reverence for the aged, treated as indispensable qualities in a virtuous character, whether heathen or Christian; but you may never have reflected on the indications which you give of the want of it in your own. If then your conscience tells you that you are guilty of those faults of manner, which I have described as but too common in our society, you may be sure that your feelings of reverence need quickening and cultivating; and if you would escape becoming the harsh, ungraceful character which grows out of such delinquency, you must reform your manners." — pp. 204, 205.

In the chapter on conduct at public places, are some remarks which we extract without comment, save to say, that they allude to an evil which we have heard lamented by the poor. They say, and with reason, that it is not in human nature not to feel the contrast between their own dress and the exhibition of finery with which their rich neighbours at church oppress them. Those who thus make use of the church as a Vanity-Fair, will doubtless say that their thoughts on such occasions ought to be otherwise employed. There is some weight in the remark; and if they who make it, will take it home and act upon it, the evil will soon be corrected.

"The display of finery and of new clothes, which is too often made at church, is so out of place, and grates so harshly on the feelings of more sober-minded people, that I have heard wishes expressed that we had a fixed costume to wear to places of worship, like the Spanish ladies, who always put on a black dress and

veil on such occasions. If our ladies were obliged to appear at church all dressed alike, in some very plain guise, I fear their attendance on public worship would not be so frequent as it is now. Better than this, however, far better, would it be, if every sober-minded Christian woman would dress, at all times, in a style suited to her character, and not let the tyranny of fashion force upon her an outward seeming, wholly at variance with the inward reality. I hope the time is not distant, when it will be considered ungentle to be *gayly* dressed in walking the streets of cities, towns, and villages; when a plain bonnet that shades the face, a plain dress, and thick shoes and stockings, shall be as indispensable to the walking costume of an American lady as they are to that of most Europeans." — pp. 338, 339.

There is a suggestion with respect to conversation which deserves regard. Every one must have noticed that there are young ladies, who, in social life, have nothing to say for themselves, and who listen to the benevolent persons who strive to entertain them, with a frigid silence that drives patience itself to despair. If it were owing to diffidence, it might be forgiven; but in almost every case of the kind, this bashfulness is created by the consciousness that their manners are too free for refined circles, and therefore the young lady, who at other times is somewhat too eloquent, is obliged to shelter herself in silence on these occasions. Great talkers are certainly great evils; but they do not abound among us: and in mixed society the difficulty generally is, to find those who are willing to do their part.

"Good conversation is one of the highest attainments of civilized society. It is the readiest way in which gifted minds exert their influence, and as such, is worthy of all consideration and cultivation. I remember hearing an English traveller say, many years ago, on being asked how the conversational powers of the Americans compared with those of the English, 'Your fluency rather exceeds that of the old world, but conversation here is not cultivated as an art.' The idea of its being so considered anywhere, was new to the company; and much discussion followed the departure of the stranger, as to the desirableness of making conversation an art. Some thought the more natural and spontaneous it was, the better; some confounded art with artifice, and hoped their countrymen would never leave their own plain honest way of talking, to become adepts in hypocrisy and affectation. At last one, a little wiser than the rest, explained the difference between art and artifice, asked the cavillers, if they had never heard of the art of thinking, or the art of writing; and said, he presumed the

art of conversing was of the same nature. And so it is. By this art persons are taught to arrange their ideas methodically, and to express them with clearness and force; thus saving much precious time, and avoiding those tedious narrations, which interest no one but the speaker. It enforces the necessity of observing the effect of what is said, and leads a talker to stop, when she finds that she has ceased to fix the attention of her audience.

"The art of conversing would enable a company, when a good topic was once started, to keep it up till it had elicited the powers of the best speakers, and it would prevent its being cut short in the midst, by the introduction of something entirely foreign to it.

"Fluency of speech seems to me a natural gift, varying much in different individuals, and capable of being rendered either a delightful accomplishment, or a most wearisome trait of character, according as it is combined with a well or ill disciplined mind. If as a nation we are fluent, it is especially incumbent upon us to be correct and methodical thinkers, or we shall only weary those who are so, by our careless and thoughtless volubility." — pp. 385, 386.

On the whole, we think this a very valuable work, and as such we recommend it to those for whom it was designed. Some parts of it will, no doubt, be ridiculed as needlessly minute; but the author must have foreseen this: and we like the moral courage which induced her to overlook all such apprehensions, and to make free reference to every thing which she thought useful and important. She has an independent and observing mind, and a power of communication that must give her great influence with the young. She seems disposed to use her talents for their benefit, and as this kind of labor requires a measure of self-denial, we trust it will be rewarded by their permanent gratitude and applause.

ART. VIII.—*Remarks on the Four Gospels.* By W. H. FURNESS. Philadelphia: Carey, Lee, & Blanchard. 1836. 12mo. pp. 340.

CHRISTIANITY is historical. It consists, essentially, in its facts; and the evidences of these facts naturally divide themselves into two classes, the direct and the indirect, — or external and internal; understanding by the latter, principally, those incidental traits of truth and nature, circumstances of probability,

casual allusions to well-known facts and usages, — undesigned expressions that mark the time, or the country ; and various other particulars that distinguish reality from fiction, and honesty from artifice, with which the Gospel narratives abound.

To this latter branch of the subject, the remarks of Mr. Furness, in the work before us, are confined ; and we regard them as generally pertinent and striking. They manifest a true and enlightened interest in the subject, and throw, often, a new, and always, a beautiful light on the records of our faith. Mr. Furness has evidently contemplated his subject from the true point of view ; and there is a freshness and warmth in his manner that commends it to every reader of taste and true feeling.

We regard his remarks on the character of the Gospel narratives, — on the unconscious consistency of the writers ; their singleness of purpose, and disregard of effect, — on the harmony and keeping of the characters, and especially that of Jesus, as among the finest specimens of moral criticism with which we are acquainted. In his delineations of the character of Jesus, the most strikingly interesting characteristic is their moral power, — the spirituality of feeling, with which they are manifestly imbued. And it is this spirit, too, that constitutes their peculiar excellence, even in a critical point of view. For, without this spirit, it is impossible to appreciate the character of Jesus, or understand his words, — his words, that are but the expressions and exponents of his character. We say, the *exponents* of his character ; and they are so in a sense, and to a degree, never paralleled, perhaps, in the case of any other being. Of him it may be said, with literal truth, that “out of the abundance,” the up-springing, overflowing abundance “of his heart, his mouth spake.” In him was exemplified, as in no other instance, the mysterious power of *true speech*. His language was action, and his action language. There was no discrepancy between them ; but they were perfectly blended, and harmonized together. And hence their power on the hearts of men. In him is set forth the deep philosophy of that Hebrew usage, — not altogether peculiar, however, — which has so much puzzled verbal critics, the substitution of the term “*word*” for the external manifestation of intellectual or spiritual power. In Jesus, as well as in his Father, they were identical. The words that he spake, they were *spirit* and they were *life*. We repeat, the true key to

the interpretation of the Gospel, is a mind imbued with the spirit of Jesus. Its light, in all its purity and brightness, can be reflected only from an object of correspondent purity. This may be said to savor of mysticism. Still, it is essentially true, and true in a deep and important sense. We do not say, that such a spirit is, of itself, sufficient without learning and study. By no means. The intellect must be enlightened, as well as the heart purified. The mind must have facts and principles on which to build its theories, and by which to guide its meditations. But we do say, that the latter, without the former, will, in this case, be of little avail. They will be without true vitality. Does not every day's experience teach us, that minds between which there is no true sympathy, are continually liable to mutual misconstruction?

Sympathy, then, is the true interpreter of mind to mind, the electric chain between spirit and spirit. And hence it is, that as every one must have observed, the humble and illiterate often show a depth and spirituality in their religious views and sentiments, that profound scholarship fails to attain. There is a more intimate and vital connexion between moral purity and intellectual discernment, than is generally supposed.

We hail this work with pleasure, as valuable in itself, and pertinent to the exigencies of the times. We trust that men are not more indifferent to their spiritual concerns at present, than in times gone by. We see no evidence that they are so. But there is in the community a more restless spirit of activity than ever before; and this induces an impatience of formal discussion on all topics. It were unwise to look for an exception in favor of religion. Now these remarks of Mr. Furness are of a nature, and are conceived in a form, not likely to offend and repel the prevailing taste. They are addressed, too, to the primeval sentiments, and deepest feelings of the human soul,—those that are last reached by the paralyzing influence of worldly pursuits. And they are more likely to command attention, and rekindle the smouldering embers of religious affections, than the same truths, presented under other forms, could be expected to do.

We think, therefore, that, in these portions of his work, Mr. Furness has performed good service for the cause of truth and piety, and we heartily accord him our grateful acknowledgments. But there are other parts of this book of which, we regret to say, we entertain very different opinions; and from

which we must be allowed to express our unqualified dissent. We refer to the chapters on Miracles, and that on Prophecy,—especially to the former; and we will avail ourselves of this occasion to discuss the former of these topics somewhat at large.

We have observed, of late, a growing disposition, as we think, on the part of the defenders of Christianity, to get rid of the question of miraculous agency, altogether, as if it were a burden that embarrassed their movements,—something, as it seems to us, like a spirit of compromise,—a disposition to meet the unbeliever half-way. Now against any such spirit as this, if it really exists, we take leave to enter our solemn protest. There is no middle ground between religion and irreligion, between faith and infidelity. There must be something *distinctive* in the belief of the Christian; or it is idle, and worse than idle, to dignify it with the name.

Our apprehensions, perhaps, are unfounded; but we do honestly apprehend, that there is a class of writers among us, who are, consciously or unconsciously, *philosophizing* away the peculiarities of the Gospel, and reducing it to a level with mere naturalism. Such, we verily believe, to be the *tendency* of Mr. Furness's theory of miracles,—and on this account we are disposed to regret its publication. We are persuaded Mr. Furness would disavow any such purpose, and he is among the last men to whom such a purpose should be attributed. Still, it is not in his option to check, limit, or *qualify* the tendency of his book. The arrow has been discharged from the bow; where it may fall, or whom it may wound, is not for him to determine. We say not this from any disposition to discourage investigation. We would not, if we could, impose any check, other than that of sound discretion and an enlightened conscience, on the expression of opinions, in any form. For ourselves, we have no dread of free and full discussion. We are not afraid to follow wherever truth may lead. Let the subject of miraculous agency be fearlessly entertained, and examined in all its aspects and bearings; and if just criticism and sound reasoning demand its rejection, in God's name, let it be rejected. We would retain nothing as an article of faith, which the most rigid logic would require us to exclude. But, as we verily think, that a disbelief of this agency involves the disbelief of Christianity, we may surely be excused for requiring that it be examined fairly, dispassionately, and *cautiously*,

and with a clear apprehension of the consequences it involves. And let us be as ready, too, to abandon *names* as *things*.

Mr. Furness sets out with giving us a definition of the term "miracle"; according to which it means simply, "what is wonderful." Now if Mr. Furness intends to abide by this definition, — and he gives us no other, — then, of course, there is no such thing as a *proper miracle* for him. Laying out of the question the effect of familiarity, one event, he thinks, is as wonderful as another; and thus by rendering every thing equally miraculous, he makes it impossible that any thing should be so. But, is this the true import of the term, in the minds of those that admit the reality of the thing? Most certainly not. Wonderful and miraculous, are not convertible terms. They differ from each other as *genus* and *species*; and they differ, too, in regard to their *proximate* causes, at least. With this loose and inaccurate apprehension of the meaning of the terms, it is not surprising that Mr. Furness's reasonings concerning them should partake of the same character. We have no intention to entangle ourselves in the toils of a definition; but we will state, as nearly as may be, what is our understanding of the thing.

When a certain physical event takes place, we are impelled by the very constitution of our minds to look for another correspondent to it. The latter we call cause; the former, effect. Now these terms may, or may not, be metaphysically and abstractly correct. They mark, however, a relation, that we regard as invariable, between two facts. And this is sufficient for our purpose. Now, if of two events thus related to each other, the one were to occur without the antecedent occurrence of the other, we might with perfect propriety denominate it miraculous; and we should so denominate it. If, for instance, the accounts of the birth of Jesus, in their popular acceptation, are true, then his birth was strictly miraculous. Again, were we to see an unlettered peasant, whom we knew to be ignorant of any other language than his mother tongue, instantaneously endued with the power of conversing freely, in their own languages, with the natives of other and far distant countries, we should regard this as a proper miracle; and so, we think, would every one that witnessed it. And, should we find the subject of this miracle considering and representing it as wrought within him for a most wise and beneficent purpose, namely, to enable him to convey the knowledge of moral and

religious truth to the natives of these countries, thus redeeming them from the bondage of error and sin, and purifying and elevating their souls, we should deem that the fact stood *justified*, — accounted for ; that a reasonable and adequate cause for its existence, — for this manifestation of preternatural power, — was adduced. Our judgment would be satisfied, and our faith sustained. We should regard the case as presenting an occasion worthy of the divine interposition. And such, it seems to us, would be the decision of the common sense of mankind. We say "interposition," and we use the term advisedly. But we would have it understood, that we use it in reference to human apprehension, not to divine omniscience. We are far from regarding the fact in question as an "emergency" in reference to the Infinite and All-wise, an oversight, a *casus omissus* in the plan of Providence. Such a view of miracles constitutes no part of our system, however the popular use of language may seem, at times, to imply it. To our limited vision, these events stand out and apart from the general course of things, and are incapable of being reduced to their established laws. They are inconsistent with these laws, *violations* or *interruptions* of their natural order. We call them *physical impossibilities* ; and we are justified in so calling them. In our apprehension they are so, and in this very circumstance consist their pertinence and their use. If they are to be regarded as mere "wonderful events," wonderful because not understood, we can perceive no adequate reason for their having been wrought, no reason worthy of the wisdom of God or the respect of man. They are almost reduced to the level of the tricks of jugglers and mountebanks ; wrought, it may be, with a benevolent purpose, but certainly implying deception, if not an intention to deceive. Miracles then, we say, are inconsistent with the established laws of the material world ; those laws which regulate the action of one material substance on another, and the action of the human mind on objects external to itself. But we doubt not that they are in perfect accordance with higher and more comprehensive laws ; existing in the divine intelligence, but unrevealed to us, and incapable, therefore, of regulating our judgment. To the Divine Mind there can be no miracles. But this forms no objection to the reception of the doctrine on our part. We see but "in part" ; but by this imperfect vision our judgment must be determined, till the veil shall be lifted from the unseen.

This, then, is what we mean by miraculous agency. A violation, or suspension, of the laws of nature; or a case, in which, what we call the effect, takes place without the previous occurrence of what we denominate the cause; or, a fact, for which no cause can be alleged but the *immediate* exertion of preternatural power. We have endeavoured to explain our meaning by the instances adduced; and by these we are willing to abide.

But what do we understand by the "laws of nature," — the "established order of things"? Not, certainly, what Mr. Furness seems to suppose we mean. We do not regard the universe as a machine, contrived and set in motion by the Deity, subject only to a general supervision, and liable to occasional interruption, or rectification, as new and unforeseen circumstances may require. If such be the conceptions of any in regard to this subject, we are not answerable for their misapprehensions. By the "laws of nature," we mean merely the order in which Infinite Wisdom sees fit to proceed. The order of events in the natural world is the law of God's operations, — the way in which the divine energy manifests itself, — and it is nothing more. We term it a law; and such, to our apprehension, it must be in order to effect the purposes of infinite wisdom. The order of nature is a revelation of God to the human soul. Is it not so? It is intended, beyond all question, to serve the purposes of intellectual and moral discipline to man, — perhaps to other orders of intelligences. Now these purposes would not be effected in any degree, nay, the processes of physical life would not be carried on, in a system where there was no established and perceivable order, where the laws of physical events could not be recognised and relied on. But, without insisting on this point, it is obvious, that, were these demonstrations of infinite power put forth capriciously, the human mind would be overwhelmed and paralyzed; perpetual wonder and amazement would induce perpetual infancy and imbecility. There must, then, be order, laws, and these laws must be revealed to the human mind, or the great purposes of our being cannot be accomplished. We do not attribute any proper causality, or vital efficiency, to inert matter; this, we think, resides in mind alone. But we do believe that the Creator has subjected the elements of the world to certain laws, or *conditions*, which cannot be changed otherwise than by an exertion of his own omnipotence. And

we further believe, that these laws, or conditions, are revealed to man; we know that the human intellect has been able to detect them, and trace their operation, and classify, by means of them, the facts that come within the sphere of its remark. We know, that on the knowledge of these laws have been erected the noblest monuments of human genius, those sciences, namely, by which man weighs the planets in his scales, and traces and calculates the comet's flight.

Mr. Furness, (p. 151,) objects to this view of the subject, that "it takes for granted, that the whole order of nature is known to us; that the limits of our knowledge are commensurate with all the laws and modes of existence." Now this is by no means a correct representation. The popular notion of miracles assumes no such thing. It assumes only, that *some part* of the order of things is known and understood; it assumes only that our experience is of *some value*, and to be relied on to a certain extent. This is the utmost amount of the assumption in question, at least, in the minds of judicious men. And to this extent the assumption is both just and necessary, and safe. We cannot proceed a step in our reasoning, whether physical or moral, without it. Nay, it lies at the bottom of all calculations, all plans and purposes of human life, as we have already remarked, domestic, social, and political. This *argumentum ad verecundiam* is, we conceive, wholly misplaced. We know, indeed, but little of the ways and works of God; we pretend to know but little. Little, we mean, in reference to the sum of things, to the compass of infinite knowledge. In reference to our own appropriate sphere, to that which it imports our well-being to know, our knowledge is not scanty. But because our view cannot embrace the whole chain of events, extending from eternity to eternity, does it therefore follow, that we are incapable of judging concerning the links that are immediately under our eye? Our horizon is a narrow one, it is true; still we may clearly perceive the objects that lie within it, and ascertain their nature, relations, and uses. We certainly do know the physical laws of our being, we know them well; to a certain extent at least; an extent, sufficient, we think, to cover the ground of the present investigation. We are entitled to call our knowledge of nature by the clear name of science, imperfect science, perhaps, but giving a clear and steady light to the extent within which it shines, and which is not to be distrusted within these limits because it cannot penetrate the

dark profound of the unknown and unknowable. Be it, that we know little of the works of God. Nevertheless, we know well that men are not wont to walk on the surface of the water. We know well, that some thousands of men are not fed on four or five loaves of bread. We know that the blind are not restored to sight by a word, or a touch. Be it, that both life and death are, in a great degree, mysterious; still we do know, that there is no law of physical organization, in consequence of which the dead return to life, at the bidding of any voice less powerful than that of him who kindled the vital flame at the first.

These things, and others of similar character, we know, with all the assurance that experience and observation ever give, and all that is requisite for the satisfaction of our reason, and the guidance of our lives. Nor will it, nor ought it, shake our faith in this experience, to be told, what we most readily admit, "that all the forms and limits of that mighty spirit, that is within and around us, are not perfectly known to us." "Secret things," doubtless, — oh how many of them, and how vast — "belong to the Lord;" but these we cannot but reckon among "those that are revealed."

We have thus stated, somewhat at length, our own views of miraculous agency in its relation to the laws of nature and the principles of the human mind. Mr. Furness, if we understand his theory, regards the miracles of the Gospel as *natural facts* merely, wrought in strict accordance with the general laws of the universe, and the principles of the human mind; the results of high, but not *preternatural*, powers; and only more wonderful than other events on account of their rarity, and, perhaps, of their higher moral aim and import. As physical events they have nothing distinctive.

If this be so, there is an end to the question of miraculous agency at once. The agency of God in these events, *ex vi termini*, was precisely the same as in all other, the most ordinary events. In so far as they manifested a generous and benevolent spirit, they were attestations to the moral character of Jesus, but none whatever to his official character. For it did by no means follow, that, because he was a kind and compassionate man, and a man, too, of remarkable endowments, he was, therefore, the expected Messiah, the moral regenerator of the world. Yet, surely, we cannot be mistaken in supposing, that he appealed often, habitually, to his miracles, as the credentials of

his authority, of his peculiar mission from God. Were these appeals, then, groundless? On the theory we are considering, for aught we can perceive, they must have been so. They were evidence of remarkable, but, if we understand Mr. Furness, not of peculiar, powers. But men, more or less remarkable, have appeared in the world in all ages; and each, too, charged, in the providence of God, as every human being is, with his own mission. How then does the case of such differ from that of Jesus? Is it merely a question of more or less, between them? We confess we cannot so regard it. We view the mission of Christ as *peculiar*; peculiar in its objects, its sanctions, and its credentials. We think Christianity rests on grounds peculiar to itself; and that the miracles of the Gospel constitute these grounds. What is new and distinctive in Christianity, is not so much the moral truths it embodies; these, in their elements at least, were long anterior to it, as in the *authority* with which it speaks. And this authority it derives from its miraculous character. We know not from what other source it could be derived. We can conceive of nothing besides the display of power *strictly* miraculous, which would justify any human being in claiming the religious faith and homage of mankind. He that comes to us with "Thus saith the Lord" upon his lips, must be prepared to verify his title to use this form of address. He must produce his commission. This Jesus did. He rests his claims on the fact, that he had "done the works that none other man did." "The works that the Father has given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness for me that the Father hath sent me." Hence appears the primary use and importance of the Gospel miracles; a use not local and temporary, but universal and perpetual. Contemplated from this point of view, — for we think they have other aspects, — they constitute the foundation of our faith and hope as Christians. For they show, that when Jesus announced himself as "the resurrection and the life," — when he set forth the doctrines of man's future being, and of the pardon of sin on condition of repentance, — he spoke with an authority not to be questioned. And authority on these points, we conceive, is precisely what was required to meet the wants of the general mind. There may be those, who have been able, by other means, to attain to a satisfactory conviction of their own immortality, and of the efficacy of repentance to obviate the consequences of sin; but such, we are persuaded, is not the case

with mankind in general. For them the results of abstract reasoning are too vague, too shadowy, and too cold, to give peace in life, or sure hope in death. And how the requisite authority could have been adduced without miraculous agency, as already remarked, we are unable to conceive.

Mr. Furness's theory represents the miraculous powers of Jesus as native and inherent, as much a part of his intellectual and moral being as the faculties of his understanding or conscience; and equally liable, in the nature of things, to misapplication, or perversion. We cannot think so. On the contrary, we believe they were *conferred* for specific purposes; and were it allowed, to suppose that these purposes could have been mistaken, or disregarded, the powers themselves would, for him, have ceased to exist. We cannot believe, for instance, as has been often said, that it was at his option to meet the expectation of his countrymen, by putting himself at their head and leading them forth to victory and conquest. Could he have so forgotten his high and holy destination, as to unfurl the banners of war, we are persuaded he would have led them, not to victory, but to ruin. The lion of Judah would have writhed powerless in the grasp of the Roman eagle; and the result would only have been, to antedate by a few years the overthrow of the Jewish state.

Further, if the miracles of Jesus were, as Mr. Furness maintains, "natural facts," wrought by his own inherent power, and "disclosing the natural sovereignty of mind over matter, of the spiritual over the physical, illustrating the vital force of his own spirit and of *all spirits*, and teaching us that the energy to which all things are, by the constitution of nature, subordinate, is spiritual force, and that this power resides to an unknown extent in the bosom of man, and will, under certain conditions, assert its supremacy;" then surely it follows, nay, it is hardly left to be inferred, that those who resemble Jesus in character, must resemble him also in miraculous power; and the one resemblance ought to be the measure of the other.

But, from the passages quoted above, taken in connexion with remarks in various parts of the book, and especially pages 181, et seq., we think Mr. Furness goes much further than this. We understand him to maintain, that all men are endued with miraculous powers; that the human mind, as such, possesses a "supremacy over" material things. This is to us a very startling proposition; and we do not wonder that he should

have anticipated the very obvious objection, that, "if it were true, we should have had more numerous manifestations of the wonder-working power of this spiritual law." We are only surprised that this objection should not have somewhat abated his confidence in the correctness of his theory. To us it seems quite incredible, that this mighty energy should have lain dormant and undiscovered, in the human soul from the days of the creation to the times of the Saviour; and still more so, if more could be, that, having been once revealed, it should again escape from the consciousness of all men, and require to be discovered anew in the nineteenth century. Here have men been beating their heads for six thousand years against the adamantine bars, within which destiny has encaged them, when all the while they carried, each in his own bosom, a key that might at any moment have set him free. For ourselves, we could as soon believe that a sixth sense remained to be discovered. No *new* power of the human mind, we believe, has been developed since the days of Moses; and if men, — it universal man, — had possessed this power, it must, for ages, have been as familiar as his power of reasoning and observation. Mr. Furness intimates, indeed, that glimpses of this consciousness have, from time to time, shown themselves among men, and instances the exorcists in the time of Jesus. The mountebanks of the world, then, as it seems, have been its seers and prophets; and what the profane call quackery is inspiration.

But let us look at this theory of mental power a little more in detail, and see to what consequences it will lead us.

We ask, then, in the first place, where and how is this "natural sovereignty" of mind over matter manifested? what is its extent, and what its laws? Or is it unlimited, absolute, subject to no conditions? Is it the property of all minds, incidental indeed, as the expression seems to import, to the nature and relations of the two substances? If so, then, at all times and under all circumstances, matter is naturally subject to the influence of mind; the latter never to that of the former. That such is not the case, we may safely appeal to every one's experience. That the mind of man, in its embodied state, possesses, to a certain extent, a power over the material organization, with which it is united, is undoubtedly true. The precise limits of this power, it may not be easy to assign; but it is quite easy to fix on a point to which it is perfectly obvious it does not

reach. And it is equally obvious to every one's experience, that matter, in this connexion, acts powerfully on mind. The mind does not give alone, it takes, and takes largely, from the body. Human character, intellectual, moral, spiritual even is, to a great degree, what it is, in consequence of this reciprocal influence. What conceptions of time, of space, of relations, — of the mighty influences at work throughout the universe, and of the laws by which they work, could pure intellect attain by itself, without a union with matter? It must, we think, be brought into relation with extension, in order to its having any knowledge of motion, by which both time and space are measured. In other words, it must be embodied, subjected to the influence of matter in due and proportionate degree.

And for its moral qualities and powers, how extensively is it indebted to this same relation! How powerful upon the moral being is the ministry of physical pains and pleasures, and, we may add, upon the intellectual also! They are the great agents in quickening the activity of both. And are not the affections, the loftiest and the purest, modified and disciplined by this same ministry? Could hope, or joy, or gratitude, or love, be what they are, without the exercise and training, which come to them through the medium of organic impressions? These speculations might easily be extended; but enough has been said to show, that the relation between mind and matter, as united in the human being, is any thing rather than that of sovereignty on one side, and mere subjection on the other. The action of the mind is modified, controlled, impeded by the body to a great extent, and at all times.

And for the power of mind over matter external to itself, — we speak of mind, of course, as existing in man; we are concerned with it in no other condition, — so far is it from being a sovereign or indefinite power, that its limits are perfectly known, and its conditions ascertained. Man has no power over external substances but by means of the muscular force he can bring to bear upon them. To this position we know of no exception. His power is simply mechanical, impulsive. Over matter beyond his reach he can exert no power whatever.

It seems to be the opinion of Mr. Furness, that the power, which he claims for the human mind over the material world, is to be found specially in the *principle of faith*, and in this principle as operating in a twofold direction, first, in the minds of the subjects themselves of miraculous agency, whence it con-

stitutes either the condition, or the efficient cause, of the miracle ; and secondly, as exerted outwardly, subjecting the material world to its control. In regard to the first of these respects, he represents Jesus as "making faith an indispensable preliminary to the exercise of his extraordinary power." We confess, we can find no authority for this representation. Jesus certainly dwells often, and much, on the importance of faith as a general principle ; and we admit, that, in some instances, he does *seem* to require it as a condition, or, at least, as a concomitant, of his performing a cure. Thus far we can go ; but this is far short of Mr. Furness's position. And it seems to us an insuperable objection to his theory, that allowing to this sentiment all that he claims for it, it will solve a part only of the facts it is put forward to explain. The very case he adduces in illustration, so far from confirming his theory, seems to our minds wholly inconsistent with it. It is that of the father who brought to Jesus his lunatic son, and besought him to cure him.

After describing his case in terms adapted, and probably intended, to work on his sensibility, he concludes by saying, "If thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us and help us." The form of expression, "if thou canst," and the feeble and wavering faith which it indicated, did not escape the notice of Jesus, and with characteristic pertinence and point he replies to the unhappy father, taking up his own phraseology, and retorting upon him his own words, "If *thou* canst believe, all things are possible." As much as to say, if you had any sound and adequate faith in me, you would not doubt either my ability or inclination to help your child. That the father felt the force of this retort somewhat as we have stated it, is evident, we think, from his reply ; and Jesus having apparently brought his mind to the right state, proceeds to perform the cure.

Now, on a review of this whole transaction, we are unable to perceive, that it furnishes the slightest support to Mr. Furness's views. We see here nothing of the wonder-working power of faith. We cannot perceive that there either was, or could be, any connexion between the faith of the parent and the cure of the child. The latter, in fact, was in convulsions at the very time of the cure, and incapable of sympathizing either with his father, or with Jesus. It is quite evident, indeed, from the whole narration, that he must have been a mere passive and unconscious recipient of the healing influence, whatever, or whencesoever, it was. And we repeat, what connexion, not

merely arbitrary, there could be between the faith of another and his cure, on the theory of Mr. Furness, we cannot conceive. But we can easily conceive, that the divine benevolence of Jesus should avail itself of the occasion presented, to confer a double blessing; and, while it relieved the sufferer, cast into the soil of the father's heart, softened by paternal affection, the seed of an operative and sustaining faith.

The case of the woman who came behind the Saviour in the crowd, and touched the border of his garment,—to which Mr. Furness likewise refers as illustrative of the power of faith,—is of a very different character. We are free to confess, that, to our minds, it is encumbered with difficulties; but, on the whole, we are inclined to regard it as one of those cases, in which strong mental emotion, by whatever cause excited, and to whatever object directed, produces a powerful effect on the physical frame. She evidently, if our apprehension of the subject is correct, looked for relief, not to any immediate exertion of divine power and goodness in her behalf, but to some mysterious and occult property in the person of Jesus, to be drawn from him mechanically, and without his knowledge, by a touch. Such a faith it was, that, in other regions, and at other times, induced numbers to seek the royal touch for the cure of scrofula; and which has, at all times, and in all countries, been the ground on which empiricism has established its dominion.

If this be the principle which Mr. Furness intends, when he speaks of the power of faith to work miracles, we admit its efficacy to a certain extent; but we do not perceive that it has any other than an accidental connexion with the miraculous agency of Jesus. Its efficacy consists in the emotion produced, no matter by what means, and is measured by the intensity of this emotion. No matter whether the subject of this emotion entertained true or false conceptions of its object, or whether that object be worthy or unworthy. Be it a veritable prophet of God, or an arrant impostor, the effect will, in either case, be the same. If these views be correct, it is manifest that this transaction, by whatever name we call it, is not to be reckoned among the miracles of Jesus. It is manifest, that there was, on his part, no conscious exertion of power in the case, either miraculous or otherwise. He was not even sensible of her presence. The act, therefore, was all her own, the whole efficiency resided in her own spirit. On whatever principle,

then, we are to explain this fact, and others of the same character, it is quite clear, that it cannot be regarded as a satisfactory solution of the general problem of miraculous agency. Let every fact of this sort be disposed of as it may, the great question of the miraculous power of Jesus remains untouched. It is still to be settled on considerations wholly distinct from any that these cases present. What has the resurrection of Lazarus, for instance, in common with the case we have been considering? and what more chimerical than the attempt to reason from the one to the other? It is from this want of discrimination, this confounding of things so diverse in character, that much of the skepticism, conscious and unconscious, on the subject of miracles, has arisen. The facts related in the Gospel histories, have, through a vague and indefinite notion of their inspiration, been generally taken in the mass, as of equal authority, bearing the same relation to the great subject of these histories, and equally involving the veracity of the historians, and the credit of the religion. Christianity has, in this way, been subjected to a responsibility which it is not bound to sustain. In reading, for example, the story we have been considering, it is hardly possible, we should think, that a sentiment of distrust, unavowed, perhaps, even to ourselves, should not spring up in the mind, a feeling more or less distinct, that the transaction is not in keeping with the character of Jesus. And feelings of this kind, if hushed, or neglected, work their effects unperceived, and secretly diffuse the leaven of doubt and misgiving through the whole character. In all such cases, it is the part of wisdom to deal honestly and fearlessly with our own spirits, to analyze our doubts, and detect the elements to which they adhere, and ascertain whether these are material facts and great principles, or only incidental circumstances and unimportant details. But weak minds are afraid of doubts, and dread to look them in the face; and scrupulous consciences often regard them as suggestions of the tempter, to be repelled, or smothered, without examination. Nothing can be more dangerous than such a course. Smothered doubts are often smouldering fires, that work unseen till the central substance of faith and peace are wasted away. There is neither sin nor danger in doubts, if they are honestly entertained, and fairly dealt with. They are, on the contrary, the harbingers and guides to truth, the elements of strength alike to the intellect and the faith. Undoubting confidence may be the happiness of

innocence; but it is hardly the condition or habitude of virtue. Reasoning men must have a rational faith; a faith based on facts and principles, that the understanding can recognise and appreciate, or it will be without steadiness and without value.

We have been led into this train of remark by the case before us. It has, perhaps uniformly, been regarded as one of the miracles of Jesus, for the reality of which the credit of the gospel history stood pledged. Yet we are persuaded, as already remarked, that it was not so. Taking the facts as stated by the writers of the Gospels,—and stated, we doubt not, so far as the intention was concerned, with perfect fidelity,—and we think they are satisfactorily explained by a reference to the existing state of things, to the intense excitement of the public mind, which the ministry of Jesus must be supposed to have produced. When we endeavour to go back in imagination, and place ourselves among the cotemporaries of the Saviour, scenes and occurrences like this we have been considering present to our minds all the features of nature and probability. It seems to us as natural to look for them as to expect that the report of the cannon should be sent back to us from the surrounding heights. We confess we should be surprised were we not to find such traces of the popular excitement, which, if the main facts be true, must have existed. We should, in such case, deem the narratives deficient in one feature at least, of verisimilitude.

In the same class as the above, we should reckon the accounts in the book of the Acts, of “handkerchiefs and aprons” carried from Paul to those that were diseased; and the bringing forth of the sick into the streets, that the shadow of Peter might fall upon them. The historian does not attempt to explain these proceedings; he does not even characterize them; he simply relates them as facts. And facts, beyond all doubt, they were, just such facts as the philosophy of human nature would lead us beforehand to expect. How many were cured in this way we are not informed; nor whether the cure was permanent or temporary. That some were relieved, seems to have been the impression of the writer; and this we can readily believe. The state of mind that led to measures of this sort could not have been without effect.

But, we repeat, facts of this character have no claim to be classed among the miracles of Christianity. Explain them as we may, they are to be regarded as incidental only, and collat-

eral to the main action of the drama. Let the truth, and reality of this be admitted, and these will follow of course, as the shadow pursues the substance. To expect the introduction of a *revelation*, in our apprehension of the term, among men, unattended by these counter-workings of human nature, were hardly more reasonable than to expect to produce motion without friction.

Mr. Furness would, we suppose, regard the case of Peter walking on the water, as exemplifying what we denominate the *secondary operation* of faith, its *exertion outwardly*. His language is, "The walking upon the water was not an infraction of the laws of nature, but a demonstration of the natural sovereignty of mind,—that spiritual power, upon which the mighty law of gravitation is, in the nature of things, dependent, and to which it must, of course, be subordinate." This language strikes us as not a little extraordinary, and we are not sure that we rightly apprehend its import. If by "spiritual power" is intended the power of the infinite spirit,—the power of God,—the statement is doubtless true; but we cannot perceive its pertinency. It accords with our system, but not with his; and we are, therefore, constrained to regard the expression as referring to the spirit of man,—to the inherent energy of the human soul. It is manifest, whatever import we are to assign to particular phrases, that Mr. Furness supposes, that Peter was sustained on the water by the *power of faith*,—the natural and inherent powers of faith, of course,—not any extraordinary and mysterious power peculiar to the person or the occasion; but just such a power as any man, and every man, in whom the sentiment of faith is developed, and in proportion to its developement, may exert at his will.

The statement amounts to this, or it amounts to nothing. And now we ask, can this be true? Can any rational man believe, that men,—all men,—are naturally endowed with the power of suspending, at will, the law of gravitation, either in their own bodies, or in others? Is it in the power of all men, or of any man, to walk on the surface of the water? or to throw himself, with impunity, from a precipice, buoyed up by the power of faith? If it be so, how happens it that the practice has not been continued,—or the experiment repeated, at least? Or will it be said, that this is the attainment of faith only in its higher degrees, and more perfect developement? Was, then, the faith of Peter so much clearer, stronger, and

more efficient than that of any man who has since lived? There is nothing in the tenor of his history to countenance such an opinion, but much of an opposite complexion.

The law of gravitation is perfectly well ascertained, and known to be universal. We cannot even conceive of matter as divested of this property. The body of Peter, like all other bodies, was made in accordance with this law, and by this law must necessarily have sunk in the water. Otherwise, it were perfectly rational, on throwing a bullet into a bucket of water, to expect to see it float upon the surface.

We say, then, if Peter, on this occasion, walked on the surface of the lake, here was a violation, or suspension, of this universal law; and, if he was sustained by the power of his faith, then faith is competent to set aside, or suspend, the law of gravitation. The walking on the water is an admitted fact,—the problem is to account for it. Mr. Furness thinks it reveals a new law. We confess we regard it as more rational, more *philosophical*, to admit the occurrence of a proper miracle, the interposition of preternatural power, in a given case, and for a worthy purpose, than to infer the existence of a new and superior law from the contemplation of a single fact,—a fact, too, in opposition to the universal sense and experience of mankind. But, if there is such a law, then, like other laws it must operate uniformly and universally,—and if one man may walk on the water, suspending the law of gravitation by the power of faith, then any other man, by the same power, may perform the same act, and may counteract, with equal facility, any other of the laws of matter. To what conclusion, then, are we driven? Evidently to this. If the mind of man possess this sovereignty over matter, then he is, potentially, set free from all physical laws and conditions whatever. He may as well walk on his head as on his feet. He may as well move through the air as along the surface of the earth. Law and accident, the possible and the impossible, become convertible terms. Natural philosophy, the knowledge of the properties and relations of physical substances, loses its uses and its end. The established course of things, the regular order of events, as antecedents and consequents, causes and effects, ceases to be. Experience of the past gives no clue to the future,—furnishes no ground of sober calculation or rational conjecture, of apprehension or of hope. The wildest dreams of the imagination cannot be discriminated from the dictates of sober judgment. He that

sows tares, may well expect to reap wheat, and he that plants brambles, to gather grapes. There is no extravagance in these statements. Of the principle in question they are no more than the legitimate consequences. The very fact adduced, — if it be correctly interpreted, — involves them all. For, if this fact were wrought by a power that is “natural,” intrinsic, to the human mind, the result of a general law, — then each and all the effects we have supposed, may, demonstrably, be wrought by the same power. Thus all things are made to depend, not on fixed and unerring laws, but on the exercise of the human will.

To our mind we must say, the possession of such a power as Mr. Furness claims for the human mind, implies the subjection of the infinite to the control of the finite. The order of Providence, the order in which God chooses to proceed, is liable to be interrupted, and the regular sequences of events broken off, by this intrusive power. It is hardly possible, we think, to overstate such a principle as this.

What the inherent energies of the human soul might enable it to perform, if freed from the restrictions of its present organization, indeed, we pretend not to say. Perhaps it might, perhaps, hereafter, it *may*, be able to pass with a volition from planet to planet, and to hold converse with other minds at the far distant points of the universe. But we do know, that, in its embodied state, these things are beyond its power; and there is no “presumption” in saying so. We have a clear conception of the modes in which it is possible for man to act. We know, that his action, whatever it be, must be in accordance with the laws of the physical world, — that he does not control these, but is controlled by them. And we know, further, that these laws must be consistent with each other. No new law that may be revealed to human inquiry, can be repugnant to any one already revealed. Further investigation may show us that we have been mistaken, — that our views were deficient in comprehension, — or that we had taken as ultimate facts those that were not so. Still, all the facts in the natural, as in the moral world, must be in harmony, and point in one direction.

We deem it absurd, for instance, to suppose that any law should be discovered by which man could act on external *matter* otherwise than by impulse, because this would be to change their whole being and condition, and supersede the

harmonies and mutual dependences of things. This is what we mean by saying that we have a clear conception of what it is possible for man to perform, — a conception that justifies us in saying, that it is *naturally impossible* for a man to walk on the water, or without mechanical aid, acting in accordance with mechanical principles, to rise into the upper regions of the air. Nor should we hesitate to apply this remark, — though, we admit, not with the same *kind* of certainty, — to the raising of the dead, or the restoring of sight, on the instant, to the blind. The common sense and apprehension of mankind in regard to these events are, we are apt to think, substantially correct. It is not difficult, perhaps, for ingenious objectors to perplex and confound these apprehensions; but it is, we think, quite impossible wholly to eradicate them from the mind, — at least without breaking up the whole texture of faith, and introducing universal skepticism. Till this is done, men will continue to believe, that the actual restoration of a dead man to life is a *miracle*, — something beyond the *power* of man, physical or spiritual, to perform.

“Since the world began,” was the natural and forcible appeal of the blind man restored to sight by our Saviour, “was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.” He regarded it, and so, in our opinion, it ought to be regarded, as a miracle, — not a mere wonderful performance, like those of mountebanks and jugglers, — which are wonderful only because the process by which they are wrought is concealed, — this were a most unworthy supposition, — but a real miracle, something wrought by divine power, in a way, if not contrary, yet certainly superior, to the ascertained laws of material action, — something, in short, which would not be a whit the less wonderful, but the more so, could we be made to perceive the principles and process by which it was effected.

But there is a class of miraculous facts recorded in the Gospel, to which it is obvious, the principle we have been considering, allowing all that Mr. Furness would claim for it, is wholly inapplicable. To this class belongs the resurrection of Lazarus, and that of the widow’s son, and the daughter of Jairus. In these cases there could, by possibility, be no scope for the exercise of faith. In regard to the former of these, Mr. Furness asks, “How do we know but the soul of Lazarus was present, and within the influence of the voice of Jesus, when he called to him to come forth?” And we, in our turn, might

ask, How does he know that it was so? This, it seems to us, would be a fitting and adequate reply. What ground, even of plausible conjecture, can he allege that such was the fact? It is his business to find facts to sustain his theory; and it is his theory not ours, that renders this conscious and intelligent presence of the dead necessary. It is his theory, not ours, that requires us to suppose, that the soul of Lazarus, after it had cast off its "mortal coil," disembodied, and inorganic, was still capable of hearing the human voice of Jesus, and of being moved by it, in accordance with a natural law, to such powerful exertion as to reanimate the lifeless body, and restore its suspended functions. And we are required to believe all this in order to avoid the supposition of an interruption, or suspension, of what we call the laws of nature. In other words, in order to evade the admission that God, who for wise and beneficent ends, conducts events in the physical world in a regular and perceptible order,—so proceeds that we may trace his footsteps, be able to classify facts, and establish sciences,—should, on occasions, for reasons equally wise and beneficent, *step aside* from this order, interrupt the regular series, and introduce an event which we cannot classify,—which, so far as human sagacity can penetrate, has no physical cause, and which, for this very reason, we call miraculous. Now, to our apprehensions, this is solving one difficulty, if difficulty it be, by another much greater. But to our minds the supposition of miraculous interposition on adequate occasions involves no difficulty. We deem the supposition of a revelation to be made by the Father of spirits a *reasonable* one, and we see not how it is possible there should be a revelation without miracles. Truths, however important, which the human mind should attain to in the ordinary exercise of its native powers, would not constitute a revelation,—a system of revealed religion. This must, in its very nature, be miraculous, or it cannot be at all. If the miracles of the Gospel are to be regarded as "natural facts," capable of being reduced to natural laws, and explained by them, it does appear to us, that Christianity, as a system of revealed truth, ceases to be. We are thrown back upon *mere naturalism*. The moral lessons of Jesus must be taken for what they are worth, like those of any other wise and good man; encumbered however with the whole weight of this history of wonderful events, which, on this supposition, *prove* nothing, and *tend* to nothing but to excite wonder at the outset, and skepticism in the sequel.

We have already had occasion to point out what we regard as the primary use of miracles ; to establish, that is to say, not the general truths of Christianity, but its *authority* as a revelation from God. Mr. Furness, however, objects to the idea that God should be represented as "bringing any thing to pass merely to prove somewhat." Now, not to insist on the unquestionable fact, that God is often represented in the Scriptures as performing works of power and grace before the Israelites "that they might know that he was the Lord," we remark, that it seems to us an erroneous theory to regard the whole course of things, not as a process, in which part is made ancillary to part, — one event the means to another, and introduced for the sake of another, — but as a mere series of separate and independent facts, — each existing for itself, and introduced for the sake of its own intrinsic excellence and importance. This theory, we think, derives no support from the word or the works of God. How many objects do we see in nature, the beauty of which is not absolute but relative ! The world is full of them. So in all the works of human skill. In complicated machinery, for example, we seldom think of dwelling on individual parts. Our sense of beauty, or admiration, is addressed and affected by the perception of design and harmony pervading the whole. We feel that single parts have little beauty in themselves, — that they are not there on their own account, — that they were not regarded by their maker, and are not to be by us, as ultimate, but intermediate, — not as ends, but as means. Thus, too, in the works of God. The spirit of beauty is indeed everywhere diffused. It seems to delight in pouring itself forth with even a prodigal profuseness on all objects, the great and the small, in general and in detail. Because the infinite Father would manifest himself in every thing, and speak to our hearts everywhere and at all times.

Still the difference is not in kind so much as in degree. The analogy is broad and palpable. The same law regulates our apprehension of both, — we cannot avoid contemplating them with kindred emotions. And this law it is that lies at the bottom of all true principles in art. The parts are regarded as relative, — subsidiary, — not as ends but as means, — and deriving their fitness and beauty from this very relation. Is the shading in a picture introduced for its own sake ? And in the great moral picture of the universe, are the shades of sin and suffering there on account of their own intrinsic beauty and loveliness, — are they *ends*, or means alone ?

There is no impropriety, we conceive, in representing God as carrying on a process, the various steps of which have reference one to another, and all to the final result. For to finite apprehension such is the fact. We cannot perceive that there is any unfitness in representing God as having brought something to pass *merely* — so far as this event was concerned — to *prove* something to our reason. Why should there be? Is not truth the great agent in moral regeneration, — in the advancement and purification at once of the individual, and of society? And does not — or may not — truth require to be proved? And if it does, is it unworthy of God to institute means to effect this proof? Suppose the miracles of the Gospel were a fitting, or necessary proof of any, or all, the truths of Christianity. Would it be unworthy of God to qualify a messenger to perform such miracles for this specific purpose? We think not. And yet on this supposition, it would be perfectly correct to say, that the miracles were wrought merely for this purpose. In effecting this single object their mission would be accomplished. But we do not restrict the miracles of Jesus to this single object. We have stated already that we think they have other aspects. We regard them as striking manifestations of his spirit and character, — parts of his *moral* mission no less than credentials of his official authority. And we agree with Mr. Furness that this aspect of these works has been too much overlooked. He was intended, in these as in other respects, to be to us the symbol of the infinite Father, — “the image of the invisible God.”

M. L. H.

NOTICES AND INTELLIGENCE.

A Greek and English Lexicon of the New Testament, by EDWARD ROBINSON, D. D., late Professor Extraordinary of Sacred Literature in the Theological Seminary, Andover. Boston: Crocker & Brewster. New York: Leavitt, Lord, & Co. 1836. 8vo. pp. xii. and 920. — Under the above title we have another valuable work from the indefatigable pen of Dr. Robinson. The lovers of sacred literature have been largely indebted to his labors heretofore,* and now they are called upon to return him their thanks for this new favor.

* We need only mention his “Translation of Buttmann’s Greek Grammar,” a popular edition of “Calmet’s Dictionary of the Bible,” and the four volumes of “The Biblical Repository.”

In the year 1825, Dr. Robinson published a translation of the first edition of Wahl's "*Clavis Philologica*," with improvements of his own. The whole edition of fifteen hundred copies was speedily disposed of, a fact which shows the urgent demand of some work of this kind. Eight years later, after his return from Germany, where he had been prosecuting his biblical and philological studies with singular ardor, he applied himself to the task of preparing a Lexicon, in which he should call no man master upon earth, but should rely on his own judgment, while he made use of the copious materials collected by his predecessors in this work. Improvements had been made in the subsequent editions of Wahl and Bretschneider. Passow and Winer had extended their profound researches, and published the results of their labors, so that Greek lexicography had, in a good degree, changed its aspect during this brief period. This was the result of that new impulse given to the study of philology in Germany, by inquiries into the origin of languages, and their various modifications.

Possessed of various and accurate knowledge in this department of learning, availing himself of the latest discoveries of the Germans, recurring at all times to original authorities, and above all, animated by a noble enthusiasm in the cause of sacred letters, the author has manifold advantages over most, if not all, his predecessors.

His object in the present work is not to give a complete Dictionary of the Greek language, but, simply, as its title indicates, a Lexicon of the New Testament; although he uniformly gives first the primary meaning of each word in classic Greek, even if it does not bear this signification in the New Testament. The sources whence he has drawn information are the same which all modern lexicographers have frequented, with various tastes,—to wit, the Greek Version of the LXX., the Apocryphal writings of the Old and New Testament, the works of Philo and Josephus, and writers of classic Greek in all the three stages of its existence.

In this work he has aimed to give the etymology of all the words, so far as it pertains to the Greek and Hebrew, and, sometimes, to the Latin. A general denotation of the affinities of the Greek with other tongues belongs to a general lexicon of the language, and is therefore wisely omitted. This etymology is uniformly placed at the beginning of the article, enclosed in brackets, and is not put at random, at the beginning, middle, or end, as is done in Schneider's Lexicon. After assigning to each word its primary meaning, he puts down all the other significations which it bears in the New Testament in logical order, thus making each article a sort of *logical* history of the word which is defined. The construction of verbs, &c., with their adjuncts, is noted at large; difficult constructions are dwelt upon and explained by reference to the usage of other writers, grammatical rules, &c. The frequent

reference to other writers is of great utility. A Lexicon is no place to *discuss* constructions, etymologies, &c., but it is convenient to the student, if the Lexicon point out to him the works wherein the discussion may be found. References to Buttmann, Matthiæ, Winer, Tittmann, &c. are very frequent in these pages. Irregular forms of words are, in general, fully explained. The peculiar usage of the writers of the New Testament is fully illustrated by reference to Hebrew and Greek authorities, both classic and Hellenistic. The peculiar use of prepositions and particles is well explained, many examples are given, and difficult passages illustrated in this manner. We might cite the words *ἵνα* and *διότι*, as well as many others, in proof of this assertion; but examples of this character are too numerous.

Difficult passages are sometimes illustrated, but in this respect perhaps the work will not be found so satisfactory as some others, to those who expect a Lexicon of the New Testament to be a perpetual commentary upon it. Schleusner, no doubt, carried this too much into detail: this rendered his work cumbrous, and the matter one sought for, like Mercutio's wit, something difficult to find, and possibly not always worth the search when one was successful. Still there was a certain completeness in this regard, in his work, for almost all difficult places received a sort of explanation, but the explications in the present work strike us as somewhat short, and occasionally unsatisfactory. But this charge applies to the work as a commentary upon Scripture, not as a Lexicon, strictly speaking.

A scholar will usually look with eyes more or less affected by sectarian prepossessions upon all passages he attempts to explain, and this gives a certain sectarian character to the work. This character will no doubt display itself if only the definition of words is given, but it will be more apparent when whole verses are explained. Each Lexicon then becomes, to a greater or less extent, the mouth-piece of the party to which the author belongs.

Notwithstanding all the learning and candor of Dr. Robinson, we fear that he sometimes looks with partial eyes upon certain words and passages. Under the word *Θεός* we find an illustration of what we mean. After defining the word to mean the *Supreme Divinity*, he says further, it is "spoken of Christ, *the Logos*," and cites the following passages as containing the declaration, that Christ and *Θεός* are identical. John i. 1; xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. Phil. ii. 6. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 8. 1 John v. 20. Rev. xix. 17, coll. vs. 7; xxii. 6, &c. We were not prepared to expect this. Compare the remarks of Bretschneider upon the same word, who more cautiously says, "de filio Dei, *λόγος*, qui, an Deus appelletur, et quo sensu, judicandum est ex locis, Jo. i. 1," and the others adduced by Dr. Robinson. But these are minor blemishes

which are to be expected in every human work, and do not essentially impair its usefulness.

This work has another advantage; for, as the author tells us in the Preface, each article, as far as practicable, contains a reference to every passage of the New Testament where it is used. Thus in seven eighths of the cases the Lexicon is a complete concordance of the New Testament, and when it is not, the student is notified of the fact. All the references, so far as we have examined them, are correct, and this cannot be said of its predecessors. In Schleusner, e. g., particularly in the English edition, notwithstanding the boast in the Preface, the references are frequently inaccurate.

We trust that this work will be extensively circulated amongst us, and that its use will not be confined to the sect of its author. We do not, however, wish it to supersede the works of Schleusner, or Bretschneider, for each of them has likewise great merits. In respect to the typographical execution of both Professor Robinson's Lexicons, they possess a decided superiority over all others which we have ever seen. The page even of Bretschneider is ungrateful to the eye, on account of the dinginess of the paper, and, still more, from the disorderly arrangement of the paragraphs. In Schleusner this defect is worse a thousand fold. It is absolutely painful to use his work, on account of the difficulty in finding what you seek. Paragraphs "are huddled and lumped," not "sundered and individual." But these pages are agreeable to the eye, and convenient for use, a sufficient interval being left between each paragraph and its fellow.

New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church. By O. A. BROWNSON. Boston: James Munroe & Company. 1836. 12mo. pp. 116. — The first impression of most persons would probably be that "New Views" of any subject are more likely to be sought after and read because they are *new*. But this is not the case. What nine out of ten most desire is, to be confirmed in their present views, and this too not so much by new arguments as by new illustrations, which will enable them the better to see and feel the force of the old arguments. The reasons, on a moment's reflection, are obvious. Original speculations, when the topics are interesting and momentous, are apt painfully to unsettle the mind; they turn the thoughts out of the track in which they are accustomed to move, and have learned to move easily, into one in which they move with difficulty; our deepest sympathies and time-hallowed associations are disturbed; and then it is an offence to our pride to be told virtually that we have need that one should teach us again "which be the first principles of the oracles of God." Accordingly it is found that the popular writers, as they are called,

especially on the subject of religion, belong, for the most part, to that class who start but few new questions, and are chiefly remarkable for their skill in throwing a new light, or a new attractiveness around commonly received truths. Mr. Brownson's book will suffer, so far as its circulation is concerned, from the real novelty of some of the speculations contained therein; and still more, as we suspect, from the title-page, and from the novel application throughout the body of the work of a few terms, such as *spiritualism*, *materialism*, and *atonement*, which have the effect to give to the whole discussion a strange and foreign air. In this, we think, the author has erred, in common with other able writers among us, — not in the originality and freedom of his speculations, for that could not be helped, but in a willingness to seem very original and free, though at the hazard of losing the sympathies of the public; or, at any rate, in the adoption of a manner which can only serve to make his originality and freedom unnecessarily startling and offensive. We are aware, however, that his own account of the matter, as given in the Preface, is so discriminating and unpretending, that it must do not a little to disarm the prejudice of which we have spoken.

"It must not," he says, "be inferred from my calling this little work *New Views*, that I profess to bring forward a new religion, or to have discovered a new Christianity. The religion of the Bible I believe to be given by the inspiration of God, and the Christianity of Christ satisfies my understanding and my heart. However widely I may dissent from the Christianity of the Church, with that of Christ I am content to stand or fall, and I ask no higher glory than to live and die in it and for it.

"I believe my views are somewhat original, but I am far from considering them the only or even the most important views which may be taken of the subjects on which I treat. Those subjects have a variety of aspects, and all their aspects are true and valuable. He who presents any one of them does a service to Humanity; and he who presents one of them has no occasion to fall out with him who presents another, nor to claim superiority over him.

"Although I consider the views contained in the following pages original, I believe the conclusions, to which I come at last, will be found very much in accordance with those generally adopted by the denomination of Christians, with whom it has been for some years my happiness to be associated. That denomination, however, must not be held responsible for any of the opinions I have advanced. I am not the organ of a sect. I do not speak by authority, nor under tutelage. I speak for myself and from my own convictions. And in this way, better than I could in any other, do I prove my sympathy with the body of which I am a member, and establish my right to be called a Unitarian."

According to Mr. Brownson, two systems have been disputing from the first the empire of the world, — Spiritualism and Materi-

alism; meaning thereby two social rather than two philosophical systems, sometimes denominated *spiritual* and *temporal*, *heavenly* and *worldly*, *holy* and *profane*, &c. Christianity was given to bring about a reconciliation or atonement between these two systems, but has failed thus far of accomplishing its object, not so much through misconceptions as through partial conceptions of what is required. The Catholic Church strove to realize spiritualism at the expense of materialism; that is, to give an exclusive prominence and dominion to that class of ideas which are denoted by the terms, God, the priesthood, faith, heaven, eternity. Protestantism, on the other hand, when true to itself, is in its tendency essentially *materialistic*; that is, transfers the preponderance to that class of ideas which are denoted by the terms, man, the state, reason, the earth, and time. Now the mission of the present, according to Mr. Brownson, is to put away these partial views, and so to exalt and purify the ideas denoted by both classes of terms as to destroy all antagonism between them, and thus to realize the true Christian doctrine of atonement as the foundation of union and progress.

These, as well as we can give them in a few words, seem to be the "New Views of Christianity, Society, and the Church," which this book is intended to set forth. We were in hopes of being able to give a fit examination of the merits of the work in our present number, but failing herein, this slight notice must suffice, until a better is prepared. One thing, however, we will say, in justice to the author. Those even who are most convinced of the unsoundness or fancifulness of his general doctrine, will be as ready as any to acknowledge the ability, eloquence, and earnest feeling expended in its exposition and defence.

We give Mr. Brownson's closing remarks.

"I do not misread the age. I have not looked upon the world only out from the window of my closet; I have mingled in its busy scenes; I have rejoiced and wept with it; I have hoped and feared, and believed and doubted with it, and I am but what it has made me. I cannot misread it. It craves union. The heart of man is crying out for the heart of man. One and the same spirit is abroad, uttering the same voice in all languages. From all parts of the world voice answers to voice, and man responds to man. There is a universal language already in use. Men are beginning to understand one another, and their mutual understanding will beget mutual sympathy, and mutual sympathy will bind them together and to God.

"And for progress too the whole world is struggling. Old institutions are examined, old opinions criticized, even the old Church is laid bare to its very foundations, and its holy vestments and sacred symbols are exposed to the gaze of the multitude; new systems are proclaimed, new institutions elaborated, new ideas are sent abroad, new experiments are made, and the whole world seems intent on the means by which it may accomplish its destiny. The individual is struggling to become a

greater and a better being. Everywhere there are men laboring to perfect governments and laws. The poor man is admitted to be human, and millions of voices are demanding that he be treated as a brother. All eyes and hearts are turned to education. The cultivation of the child's moral and spiritual nature becomes the worship of God. The priest rises to the educator, and the school-room is the temple in which he is to minister. There is progress; there will be progress. Humanity must go forward. Encouraging is the future. He, who takes his position on the "high table land" of Humanity, and beholds with a prophet's gaze his brothers, so long separated, coming together, and arm in arm marching onward and upward towards the Perfect, towards God, may hear celestial voices chanting a sweeter strain than that which announced to Judea's shepherds the birth of the Redeemer, and, his heart full and overflowing, he may exclaim with old Simeon, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'" — pp. 114–116.

Memoir of WILLIAM CAREY, D. D., late Missionary to Bengal; Professor of Oriental Languages in the College of Fort William, Calcutta. By EUSTACE CAREY. *With an Introductory Essay,* by FRANCIS WAYLAND, D. D., *President of Brown University.* Boston: Gould, Kendall, & Lincoln. 1836. 12mo. pp. xxii. and 422. — It cannot generally be said in praise of American editors of English works, that they add any thing to those works by their additions, or improve them by their improvements; but the value of this edition of the Memoir of Dr. Carey is decidedly increased by President Wayland's Introductory Essay. It is, indeed, the spirit and moral of the volume which it precedes. For facts and details, the reader goes of course to the Memoir, but the philosophy of Carey's life and labors is condensed in the Essay, and so condensed there, that it really introduces, not supersedes the Memoir, and sharpens the reader's curiosity to peruse it, instead of taking off its edge. The Memoir itself is printed, as was just and right, unaltered from the English edition. It consists chiefly of extracts from Dr. Carey's own journals and letters, which his biographer has connected into a narrative by occasional remarks and statements, prevaillingly interesting and judicious.

Dr. Carey was a most remarkable man. Without the advantages of high birth, of fortune, of bright genius, of any but a common education, without influential friends, and in spite of influential opposers, he arrived at the honor of being the first to introduce Christianity into the British possessions in India. He was the son of a village schoolmaster, and was born in Paulerspury, England, August 17th, 1761. He was apprenticed to a shoemaker at Hackleton, became a shoemaker himself, acquired his first knowledge of Hebrew on his shoemaker's bench, and, while a shoemaker, began preaching to a small congregation of dissenters. He was miserably

poor, had a sick and nervous wife, and a fast-coming family of children. This indigent, burdened, preaching shoemaker conceived the design of making known the Gospel to British India, to a vast and rich country, the selfish merchant-princes of which needed it as much as the natives, and were as strongly set against it. To British India no British vessel would take him. He sailed in a Danish ship, and on declaring his purpose, some time after his arrival, was obliged to quit the British possessions, and live in a territory which was held by the Danish government. By means of his indomitable perseverance, blessed by Divine Providence, he at last succeeded. Prejudice and self-interest were overcome, and favor was conciliated. He acquired the languages of the natives; translated the Bible into those languages; was made Professor of Oriental Literature in the College of Fort William; gave a religious impetus to his countrymen, which resulted in the establishment of bishoprics, churches, schools, and other means of improvement in India; gained, by way of recreation merely, a knowledge of botany which ranked him among the first natural historians of the day; and, after disbursing large sums which were confided to him in the prosecution of his labors, died, owing no man, honestly and honorably poor. — We know not how some may be affected at the view of such a man, but to us, a whole row of common kings and potentates looks very mean by the side of him.

The example of Dr. Carey is an especially useful one to those who feel that they have not what is called genius; as it may show them that they can accomplish important objects without genius. "In Dr. Carey's mind," says his biographer, "there is nothing of the marvellous to describe. There was no great and original transcendency of intellect; no enthusiasm and impetuosity of feeling; there was nothing in his mental character to dazzle, or even to surprise. Whatever of usefulness, and of consequent reputation he attained to, it was the result of an unreserved and patient devotion of a plain intelligence, and a single heart, to some great, yet well-defined, and withal practicable objects." "Eustace," said he once to his nephew, the author of the present Memoir, "if, after my removal, any one should think it worth his while to write my life, I will give you a criterion by which you may judge of its correctness. If he give me credit for being a plodder, he will describe me justly. Any thing beyond this will be too much. I can plod. I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe every thing."

As Dr. Carey was a Calvinistic Baptist, he was, as a matter almost of course, not at all too friendly to liberal views of Christianity, or to those who entertained them. But every man of a truly liberal mind will overlook this, and not suffer it to diminish

the gratification which he will receive from reading the Memoir of one who was an ornament to his race. He died at Serampore, June 9th, 1834.

The Complete Poetical Works of WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: together with a Description of the Country of the Lakes in the North of England, now first published with his Works. Edited by HENRY REED, Professor of English Literature in the University of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia: James Kay, Jun. & Brother. Boston: James Munroe & Co. 1837. Royal 8vo. pp. xxiv. and 551. — In the compass of a short notice it will not be expected that we should attempt any thing like an estimate of the merits of such a poet as Wordsworth, or a criticism on his works. The time has gone by when a page or two of lordly sarcasm, as ignorant as it was arrogant, or a page or two of hesitating praise, mingled and stiffened with a requisite portion of censure, was deemed proper treatment of a bard, whom the whole reasonable world now ranks among the greatest. We therefore feel that there is no immediate call upon us for a paragraph of defence and eulogy. Our present purpose is simply and heartily to recommend Professor Reed's edition of Wordsworth, as one which does justice to the poet, and is calculated to satisfy the not easily satisfied wishes of the many who love and revere him. It is, what it professes to be, a complete edition of his poetical works, such as might be sought for in vain in his own country, and contains also his prefaces and essays, his beautiful description of the Lakes, and his Essay upon Epitaphs. The editor has performed his part in a most judicious manner, and in the true spirit of one "who claims to have brought to the task an affectionate solicitude for every verse in the volume." He has given us the pure text, and has interspersed, with the poet's own notes, a few, and but very few others, which consist "almost entirely of illustrative passages from the writings of those with whom Mr. Wordsworth would most willingly find his name associated." The poems which were lately published under the title of "Yarrow Revisited, and other Poems," are placed in their appropriate divisions, as the poet himself would have arranged them. The publishers may challenge for themselves a full portion of praise, for having sent forth a book which confers credit on the American press. Since we received it, we have read a considerable portion of its contents, and, accustomed as we are to proof-sheets, and familiar as we are with the author, we have not yet detected a typographical error. The page is clean and bright, and the type is as clear and large as eyes can wish. We have seldom seen a book which has given us so much pleasure.

New Publications. — James Munroe & Co. have issued the first and second volumes of "*Conversations with Children on the Gospels; conducted and edited by A. Bronson Alcott:*" a singular work, of which we hope to give some account in our next number. Benjamin H. Greene has just published a truly valuable "*Memoir of the Rev. Bernard Whitman. By Jason Whitman.*" 16mo. pp. 215. Perkins & Marvin have sent out an American edition of *The New Testament, arranged in Historical and Chronological Order, with copious Notes, &c.*; by the Rev. George Townsend. *The whole revised, divided into paragraphs, &c.*; by the Rev. T. W. Coit, D. D." Royal 8vo. pp. 455 and 472. Perkins & Marvin have also given a beautiful reprint of the second London edition of Dr. Bloomfield's "*Greek Testament, with English Notes, critical, philological and exegetical.*" In two volumes, 8vo. It is one of the most elegant and accurate specimens of various and difficult typography which have appeared in this country, and reflects great credit on the enterprise of the publishers, on the University Press at Cambridge, from which it issues, and on the gentlemen who have the control of that establishment. Of the merits of the work itself we hope to speak hereafter.

We are glad to learn from an advertisement of James Munroe & Co. that the second and third volumes of Mr. Noyes's *New Translation of the Hebrew Prophets* is now in press. It is understood that the first volume of Professor Palfrey's *Lectures on the Old Testament*, is going to press immediately. Gould & Newman also advertise as in press, a translation of *Olshausen on Acts*, by D. Fosdick, Jr.; Wiseman's *Twelve Lectures on the Connexion of Science with Revealed Religion*; a reprint of *Tyndale's New Testament*, edition of 1526, with marginal readings; and the first American edition of Cudworth's *True Intellectual System of the Universe, with a Discourse concerning the True Notion of the Lord's Supper*; and two *Sermons on 1 John ii. 3, 4, and 1 Cor. xv. 57*: also, *A Treatise concerning Eternal and Immutable Morality*, in two volumes, 8vo.

We have on hand several articles, among which is one on the Duties of Young Men in respect to the Dangers of the Country, being a review of the Rev. Mr. Muzzey's excellent little manual, *The Young Man's Friend*, and a Discourse on the character of the late Rev. Dr. Howard, of Springfield, which we regret not being able to find room for in this number. They will appear in our next.

EDITORIAL NOTICE.

IN the Introduction to the New Series of the "Christian Disciple," of which this Journal is a continuation under another title, the objects of the work are thus stated, in 1819. "It will aim to point out the methods and sources of a right interpretation of the Scriptures; to throw light on the obscurities of these ancient records; to state and maintain the leading principles of Christianity; to vindicate it from the misinterpretations of friends, and the cavils of enemies; to illustrate its power in the lives of eminent Christians; to give discriminating views of evangelical virtue, and of the doctrines most favorable to its growth; to weigh impartially the merits of theological works, and of other books, which have a bearing on morals and religion; and to furnish interesting information, particularly in regard to the religious condition of the world." In the Preface to the first number of "The Christian Examiner," in 1824, the editor says: "Our most satisfactory labors will be those in which we may coöperate with our fellow-Christians; and we are happy to think, that the truths in which they dissent from us, stand less in need than heretofore of direct vindication, and that we shall be more at liberty, in future, to trace their application to the concerns of life, the reformation of literature, the correction of moral sentiment, the progress of society, the universal discipline of human nature, and the accomplishment of the designs of the divine benevolence." Two years afterwards, on a change in the editorial department, the work, it is said, "will be conducted on the same principles, maintain the same doctrines, and its contents be supplied by the same writers as heretofore. It has advocated no doctrines, however, and been conducted on no principles which forbid making a change, whenever a change shall appear to be an improvement. Indeed, it owes its existence to the demands of an inquiring and improving age; and unless it keep up with, or in advance of the progress of the times, it will be left behind to perish; — a consummation which, we trust, we have a higher motive than that of any worldly interest for striving to prevent." "Above all," says the editor in the same Address, "may we never forget, that the same freedom we claim for ourselves, belongs of equal right to the whole family of man. We therefore will not be angry with our brethren who dissent from us, for it may be without a cause. Though the great outlines of our constitutions are in all men alike, yet in the filling up, in the lights and shades of men's minds, there are differences without number, which must produce a corresponding variety in judgments and opinions. When tempted to complain of others, therefore, because they cannot think as we think, hear as we hear, read as we read, we hope we shall stop and consider who

hath made us to differ. They are God's servants, not ours; and to their own Master let them stand or fall. As we would resist all dogmatism, and imposition, and prescription ourselves, we shall be careful how we impose upon, dogmatize, or prescribe to others." Again; the association of gentlemen, under whose care and general supervision "The Christian Examiner and General Review" was undertaken in 1829, observe: "It shall be the main object of the publication, in treating any book or subject which has a bearing on religion or morals, to present those considerations respecting it, which would suggest themselves to the mind of an enlightened Christian. The work shall be characterized by openness, fearlessness, and moderation in the expression of opinions on any topic of public interest, not flattering popular prejudices, nor accommodating itself to them."

The undersigned, who are again associated as editors of the *Christian Examiner*, avail themselves of the occasion afforded by the commencement of a new volume, and the passing of the work into the hands of other publishers, to state, with some explicitness, the principles on which they propose to conduct it. These principles are the same on which it has been conducted, as we have seen, from the beginning. It is the intention of the editors to give as large a portion of their pages as ever to literary criticism, to history and biography, and to topics of common and practical interest; to sustain and vindicate the reputation the work has acquired for candor, liberality, and independence; and to make it, in short, not the organ of a society or of a sect, but a work for liberal Christians, the contributors to which will neither be required to sink their individuality, nor be understood to implicate others. If, as in former years, new topics of difference and discussion find their way from time to time into the *Examiner*, it will not be owing to any change in the principles on which it is conducted, or to any change of writers, for the principal contributors are to be the same, in general, as heretofore; but to the progress of inquiry, or the altered circumstances of the church. In the early days of the *Christian Disciple*, the Trinitarian controversy was new in this country, and the various questions it involved were yet to be gone over, and supplied ample material for theological discussion, on which Unitarians were agreed among themselves. But this controversy is wellnigh worn out, and other questions have taken its place in the public interest, respecting which the leading members of our own denomination differ, or have not yet made up their minds. Now it is obvious that in regard to all such questions the *Examiner* must adopt one of three courses: be silent; allow one side only to speak; or allow both sides to speak. Silence would not only betray an unworthy timidity, and prove fatal to its

interest and circulation as a periodical work, but be in contradiction to the very idea of such a work, the peculiar province of which is to take up and discuss the topics of the day, the controversies by which the public is agitated at the time. If then the Examiner were to adopt the second alternative, — taking up these controversies, but allowing one side only to speak, — that side might perhaps be satisfied; but the Examiner would cease, of course, to be a work for the whole denomination, and become the exclusive organ of one section of it. A rival work would immediately be commenced by the excluded, that through it they might obtain the justice of a fair hearing before their brethren; and the consequences of this step would not only be injurious in many respects to the Examiner, but multiply, exasperate, and prolong the disputes in question, to the serious harm of the denomination and the public. It remains that we should allow both sides, as Unitarians, to be represented in this work. And it is believed that no evil whatever will result from such a course, so long as the work is conducted on the part of the editors with discretion and firmness; so long as no more than the usual space is allowed to controversy of any kind, and no controversy is admitted which has not made such progress as to demand public attention, and no one is permitted to engage in this, who is not competent and disposed to maintain his side of the argument with intelligence, as a believer in Christ, and in a Christian spirit; so long as it is understood, that, from the nature of the case, no one is responsible, in any degree, for the views presented in such an article, but the individual over whose signature it appears; and, finally, so long as mutual recriminations are abstained from scrupulously, the only object had in view by all the parties being to supply the reader with the materials for making up an independent judgment. On the contrary, it is hoped and confidently expected, that a temperate and judicious carrying out of this liberal plan, will have the effect to impart additional life and interest to the Examiner, qualify it the better to meet the exigencies of the times, and contribute materially and essentially, under the divine blessing, to extend its circulation and its usefulness.

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